THE DETERMINANTS OF SOCIAL COMMERCE PURCHASE INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

Because of the rapid assimilation of social media into the conventional e-commerce setting, the focus has switched from traditional e-commerce to social commerce. To effectively apply social media methods to drive up purchases in social commerce, practitioners and academics must have a firm grasp of the drivers and causes accounting for the acceptability of social commerce among the people. With the use of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Social Exchange Theory (SET), this research analysed Chinese consumers' propensity to make purchases via social marketplaces. Structured equation modelling (SEM) with the help of AMOS statistical software was used to analyse the results of a questionnaire that yielded 632 valid replies. The study's findings show that trusting views, such confidence in social networks, the integrity of the seller, and the seller's generosity, significantly influence the desire to make a transaction via social commerce. In social commerce, however, buyer intent was not significantly affected by the seller's expertise. Other findings indicated that consumer social commerce experience significantly predicted social network trust, seller honesty, seller competence, and seller kindness in social commerce exchanges. The major contributions of this study to the literature of e-commerce and social commerce are the validations of the significant impact of consumer experience on the four-trusting belief factors (trust in social networks, the integrity of the seller, the competency of the seller, and the benevolence of the seller).
 We explore the consequences for practise and for further study.

E-commerce, social commerce, trusting beliefs, social commerce experience, China, WeChat, TAM, SET, and the social exchange model are all terms that may be found in the index
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INTRODUCTION

The use of social media technologies inside the e-commerce ecosystem has accelerated and reshaped the growth and spread of e-commerce. E-commerce, or electronic commerce, is the process by which goods and services are bought and sold via the Internet rather than through more conventional means. According to the official definitions [1], [2], e-commerce is the branch of e-business that facilitates the buying and selling of products, data, and services via the Internet.

As of now, e-commerce is widely adopted all over the globe, allowing customers to purchase whenever they choose, with the assurance of a safe and rapid payment and delivery procedure, lower prices, more efficiency, and better customer care. [3], [4], [5], [6]. Boosting anything with the use of social media technology
 The development of EC in China may be broken down into six distinct periods.such as sprouting, expanding, speeding up, and bearing fruit split and reorganise [10]. This massive strategic expenditure is now what's

driving investment in EC infrastructure. Chinese e-commerce has seen meteoric growth because to the country's robust economic basis. online transactions, a growing industry, internet to The ine (O2O) paradigm has permeated the established sector. rapid growth of international agricultural e-commerce and cross-border e-commercegrowth[10].Some of the policies initiated by the The Chinese government pledges to encourage further growth. and growth of EC include things like reducing the entry barrier old to aid in the development, financing, and maintenance of EC infrastructure expanding financial support for EC, boosting the organization's credit system viability and expansion, credit system promotion, risk mitigation improving the law and establishing a safe platform for online transactions by making the laws stricter [10]. Because of these strict restrictions, paid off, as shown by China's present position as the world's biggest by 2022, the global e-commerce sector will account for over of all EC trades in the globe [11]. Online shopping China's digital transaction volume has topped 710 million. In 2020, consumers and businesses spent $2.29 trillion, which by 2024 [12], which is when it's expected to reach $3.56 trillion. It was in addition predicted that China's e-commerce industry to have a population greater than that of the United States, France, Germany, Britain, and Japan [12]. Also It was predicted that China's online retail market would growth to 52% of the world's total retail market, ranking China nation where there are more internet sales than in any other country before it. in contrast to the conventional

retail market [12]. The adaptable, useful, and factors unique to China's social media environment, which are linked the rise of affluent and sophisticated shoppers) catied, and socially-active millennials) and a reliable source of information date of EC expansion across the years provide the basic foundation for expanding e-commerce's reach into social The Chinese commercial revolution. In addition, the change to Increases in infrastructural quality, increased the rise of mobile devices and the popularity of nancing [13].

The transition made possible by social commerce encourages gambling. Numerous options for consumers, particularly in terms of shoppers, business owners, and members of the community business owners in order to interest customers [14], [15], [16]. Social Therefore, trade enables more rapid promotion and dissemina distribution of advertising and product information via social media social media platforms, such as WeChat, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. [17], [18], [19]. It's a tactic used by online retailers and businesses to integrate social networking buttons onto company websites customer engagement and interaction on social media comerce [17]. Because of this heightened participation, social media commercial activities including the exchange of information that lead to a sale results [17]. One of the main benefits for companies is that they may employ one advantage of social commerce is that it may catch the eye customers anywhere in the globe more effectively than real, physical stores [20], [21]. The uniqueness of this Involvement from consumers may boost data sharing. engaging in productive peer

advice seeking and cooperation, and in the realm of social commerce [20]. Moreover, customer purchasesing behaviours may be reshaped and organised with the help of arti strategies for social neural networks that meaningfully contribute processing efficiency and performance optimisation data [22], [23]. Moreover, neural network techniques and machine learning trained on data are crucial for The opinions, sentiments, and overall level of contentment Regarding patterns of behaviour in online communities [24], [25] It makes use of the social commerce system. Connectedness in social media Commerce functions like interaction, suggestion, and perceptions on the quality of the input they get. value and, in turn, affect consumers' propensity to buy in social business [26].

Consumers' mindsets and sensitivity to social commerce have been revolutionised by China's state-of-the-art internet and mobile technology [27]. This social-shopping phenomenon promotes user-generated content via rating, sharing, user-generated content such as ratings, comments, and referrals Eventually, this factor may propel China's adoption of social commerce [28]. It's estimated that $300 billion in revenue comes from social commerce in China. in spite of the fact that the sums transacted in China's social retail trade increase to RMB 1.675 trillion (about $ 242.41 billion) by 2020, accounting for 11.6 percent of all online sales Chinese activities [29, 30]. Total retail sales of social media Chinese trade totaled $351 billion US in 2015, an all-time high. to exceed $500 billion (USD) [31] by the year 2024, according to estimates. In the first three months of 2022, the social commerce sector is expected to is forecasted to increase by 13.3% annually in China, increase to $37,851,9 million (or more) by the end of 2022. grow to $7,433,128,000,000,000 [$] by 2028 [32]. Mar Experts in the stock market predict that online social shopping will Over the next year, the industry as a whole will see a rise in sales volume. raise the value of the jewellery industry to $474.81 billion (RMB 3.280 trillion) by 2023 [30]. These numbers speak much about the growth of social commerce. social commerce is a growing trend in China, according to industry analysts. is more widespread in China than the United States [30]. In 2019, China's overall social commerce trade volume was $186.04billion(RMB1.285trillion)ascompared totheUSA whichwas$19.42billioninthesameyear[30].It went even projecting that 20% (357.2 billion) of People in China would have participated in social purchasing. (e-)business doings [30]. Users of social marketplaces in China's population increased from 780 million in 2020 to 795 million in 2030. in 2021.

WeChat (also known as Weixin), launched in 2011 as a social media and messaging smartphone app, is China's most widely used social commerce system. WeChat Pay is an integral part of the WeChat platform that enables users to make in-app purchases and pay for goods and services.

When compared to other payment systems (like Alipay), WeChat Pay stands out because it integrates with the social media app WeChat itself, while Alipay is a separate smart and mobile payment system

[33]. This means that users of WeChat may seamlessly transition between social interactions (such as messaging and status updates) and other activities (such as online shopping and scheduling appointments) without leaving the app. In a nutshell, this implies that everything can be handled entirely within of WeChat. Additionally, WeChat pay's 84.3% penetration rate is greater than Alipay's 62.6% [33].

 WeChat is notably well-liked by new Chinese smartphone users, especially those living in rural regions. WeChat's multi-purpose nature, which extends beyond social networking and messaging, made it the most popular smartphone app in China by the end of November 2020, with 983 million monthly active users [34]. About a quarter of all WeChat users are between the ages of 25 and 30, and 26% of all Chinese mobile phone users spend at least 30 minutes a day chatting on the app [35]. Users' motivation to use WeChat is governed by amusement, sociality, information, and trust, according to empirical study [36]. Consumers are more likely to engage in social activities on WeChat if businesses provide social support, emotional support, and information assistance [37].

The purpose of this research is to learn why and how WeChat users make purchases via social marketplaces. Since its beginnings as a social communication system, WeChat has been evolved to extend into commercial operations and interactions, making it the most popular social media app in China. Thus, WeChat is worthy of investigation and important as a research target as a social platform that has been ingeniously transformed into a commercial business

system, as it has fundamentally changed the daily living conditions and the way of life of the Chinese people (i.e., integrating their social media lives with com mercial activities/interactions). As a result, they end up taking part in social commerce discussions happening on platforms like WeChat. To accelerate the spread of social commerce as opposed to conventional e-commerce, it is crucial to get an understanding of the challenges involved in influencing people to make purchases using social media. Several research [38, 39, 40] have shed light on what compels Chinese users to make purchases via social commerce (WeChat) and what they hope to gain from doing so. However, this study aims to fill a previously identified need by focusing on concerns of trusting beliefs, which have received very little attention in previous studies. When it comes to making financial transactions, trust is of paramount importance [41], and this is especially true in the online world of social commerce. When the stakes in a transaction are money [42, 43], [44], concerns of trust between the seller and the buyer become paramount. In order to engage in less hesitant and risk-averse social interactions with merchants, consumers may benefit from increasing their trusting belief dimensions [42], [45], [46]. To better understand how these factors can determine Chinese citizens' purchase behaviours on WeChat (social commerce), we integrated belief indicators like trust in a social network, the integrity of the seller, the seller's competency, and the seller's benevolence along with consumer experience into the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Social Exchange

Theory (SET). The purpose of this paper is to answer the following research questions, which will help us achieve those aims: 1) How much do the four (4) trusting belief variables affect customers' decisions to buy on WeChat-based social commerce? And 2) how much does the customer's history with e-commerce and social media play a role in shaping their level of trust?

This research uses TAM and SET to investigate what factors influence users' actions and motivations across the buying and selling phases of social commerce. The research analyses consumer behaviour and decision-making in social commerce via the lens of TAM (a model developed to anticipate the adoption of information technology). Using SET, we investigate the role that trusting belief indicators such confidence in social network systems, seller honesty, seller competence, and seller kindness play in shaping consumers' intents to make a purchase in social commerce. We look at how consumers' and sellers' prior social commerce experiences shape their trusting attitudes and how those attitudes play out in the context of SET-based social commerce transactions. According to SET, consumers' comparison of price and value drives their trading behaviour. [47], [48]. When it comes to social exchange connections, such those formed via social commerce or online shopping, etc., trust is essential in order to create and maintain them. Despite some superficial parallels, the architectures of EC and SC are distinct enough that the function of trust may vary depending on the context. However, since EC and SC are so intertwined, customers may easily move their confidence from one to the other.[50],[51].

The confidence that consumers have in SC might be affected by the fact that, as a novel business model, it is associated with more uncertainty and risk for customers than EC is [50]. These considerations informed the decision to include TAM and SET into this investigation. TAM is a framework for understanding adoption behaviours in relation to technology, while SET seeks to characterise relationships as outcome-oriented social behaviour, wherein individuals choose to form and maintain relationships so as to minimise costs while maximising benefits. TAM helps to clarify the role that mobile technology (including social media technology) plays in SC systems and the adoption behaviours of consumers, while SET looks at the relationships formed and maintained as a result of consumer interaction in social commerce. Although the distinct functions of SET and TAM in SC may also hold true for EC, the lack of sufficient social contact created by social media in pure EC systems may make the occurrence of SET in EC less probable. The findings of this research provide new insights on the social

Despite the fact that previous studies have looked at the reliability of e-commerce, the distinctive contributions of this one make it stand out. Considerations for Belief. For instance, studies have shown that perceptions of one's kindness, ability, and integrity customer confidence [54, 55] and past purchases [56] influence shoppers' decisions. However, these studies have not a) looked at how these Consumers' faith in brands may be a major motivator.the role of

customer experience in social commerce, and might affect how customers feel about these dependable beliefs (confidence in online social networks, faith in the honesty of the seller, the vendor's expertise, and the seller's generosity. Thus, the uniqueness and innovation of this are research that can aid companies in understanding the social business climate in order to hone their social media company revenue and profits with the use of e-commerce technologies. Social Therefore, networking tools may be used to encourage social commerce platform seller engagement [57]. For the rest of the article, I will summarise as follows: This theory scientific context, hypothesis generation, research model, Discussion of study methods, findings, and analysis in conclusion, and with management and theoretical ramificationsdiscuss the study's flaws and shortcomings.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

A. COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

In December of 2019, an outbreak of a coronavirus later named the COVID-19 pandemic was discovered in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

The COVID-19 pandemic was designated a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on January 30, 2020 due to the terrible nature of this lethal virus. Since then, the COVID-19 pandemic has expanded relentlessly, touching every country and territory on Earth [58], [59]. Governments throughout the globe took drastic steps in response to the severity of COVID-19, including social isolation and voluntary separation, which resulted in the complete or partial closing down (limited movement of people, commodities, and services)

of cities and nations [60], [61]. Lockdown restrictions caused severe problems in supply chains throughout the world and at home [62], [63]. Since the restricted movement amid social distancing measures has contributed significantly to the current changes in consumer behaviour and attitudes [64], [65], the e-commerce (cross-border e-commerce, social commerce) environment is one of the industries that was hugely affected by COVID-19.

The dramatic shift in consumer preferences of the period

Researchers have been looking at the ever-changing online consumer landscape (e-commerce/social media) since the release of COVID-19. An awareness of what motivates consumer spending trends before and after COVID-19 is crucial to personal and commercial success. Since then, several research have been conducted to helpful features of changes in consumer behavior Then later, following the outbreak of COVID-19. Example: motorists of Observations of Consumer Activity During the 2019 COVID in Malaysia believing there is a causal link between how severe things seem and how alone one feels on the habits of shopaholics [68]. Moreover, China, research that looked at the effects of the COVID-19 quarantine on sustainable perspective on pursuit and consumption perspective, confirmed that customers' knowledge (both subjective and goals) in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic While stores are closed, people make changes to their consumption habits that are more environmentally friendly[69]. Financial and food security are other important considerations. Perceptions of health risks are seen as crucial in under the sustainable consumption and shopping habits of amid the epidemic [69] customers. Investigation of Instinct Consumer spending patterns during the 2009 COVID-19 epidemic customer apprehension over complete closure, competition, and shortage restricted availability of necessities, a lack of stock, and Anxiety-

driven purchases have a significant and beneficial effect on purchasing habits [70]. According to onimpul, an Indonesian research Buying on impulse proved that shortage was a real problem in the US. noticed the rise in impulsive purchases and the impact social media found to moderate the relationship betweens carcity messages and uncontrolled spending [71]. Moreover, in light of this the buying behaviour in social commerce, it was found that In terms of social commerce, social support did not play a significant role. to buy when the epidemic was going on, but external circumstances (convenience, elation, melancholy) carry out [72].

B. MODEL OF TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

Information theory relies heavily on notions of technology adoption. Systematic inquiry. Adoption theories like this provide theore theoretical groundwork for fleshing out the adoption patterns with relation to a certain piece of technology. Online shopping and banking are two such technology examples. Business based on social interaction. To provide a clear rationale for the change of cutting-edge software and hardware, widespread technological change speculations have been put up. Technology is one of them. The University of Colorado's Theory of Acceptance and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) [75], the Universal Model of Technology Concept of Diffusion of Innovation [75], and the Theory of Planned Behaviour [76] (DOI)[77]andtheTheoryofTask-technologyFit(TTF)[78]. The aforementioned ideas on the spread of new technologies include Researchers universally agree that the TAM is the gold standard. This is because to the low-complexity and efficient metrics for evaluating a technology's performance technical infrastructure [79, 80]. TAM's underlying premise is that implementing a brand-new technical framework reliant on two crucial ideas (indicators), including as well as how simple and helpful people think it is to utilise [73]. The consumers' opinion of the product's utility, or its "perceived usefulness." think doing so via the use of technology will help them succeed [73]. There is a presumption of simplicity in usage. belief among consumers that adopting a new data system will without any ambiguity or confusion [73]. The TAM takes these things into account. model as a predictor of both intent to use and actual use using new gadgets and methods. The reason why TAM is still useful today is Many countries have vastly varied cultural norms and preferences. attempts, and as a result, they tend to influence both the dissemination and the acceptance of any novel data structure. TAM was used because of its simplicity, which has ultimately led to its acceptance as a normative definition of the phenomenon under investigation. the engagement between the parties during the trade is bound by [91]. In a nutshell, they serve as the deal's guiding principles. relationship/process [91]. On top of that, the typical char

D. HYPOTHESES

One) **Dependability of Social Media**

The definition of trust is "the willingness to be vulnerable to another." susceptible to the influence of others [101], [102], [103]. As a rule, Become an invaluable customer to online marketplaces by using social media. is predicated on customers' expectations that The online retailer will follow a strategy that is defined, unambiguous, trustworthy (honesty), and dependable the safety and happiness of the buyer, no matter how strong the ability of the shopper to keep tabs on their online purchases c [104]. It is well acknowledged that trust is a crucial influential factor in the growth of online markets and social media business on all sides [105, 106]. Problems in Trusting Others is significant, especially in the online setting, The choice to share and receive data relies on have reassuring qualities [107, 108]. Construction of confidence Users are given more agency in

social network platforms. aspects of social networking sites' credibility content (information, media, goods, etc.) and behavior internet vendors (S) [109]. As trust levels rise, we might expect to see the user-generated material and rely on it as a result result in less apprehension and danger in regards to the results of the engagement and more time spent interacting [108], [110], [111]. If a customer has faith in a social media consumer behaviour is influenced by the site/environment. seek out business choices on social media [109, 112]. In the the same way, if certain customers or users don't have faith in the If people don't want to buy from you because of your social media presence, online communities [112]. When clients are put in a may not have much faith in online communities, but have enough in the vendor Whether or not they are likely to make a purchase from this vendor online. It's quite improbable that they'll do so (online) using a networked system, and if they do, they could choose to engage with something else instead [109] The vendor. The evaluation of the buyer based on reliability of social media platforms is crucial in motivating them to do business with an online social media marketplace vendor [109]. We can no longer trust began to correlate with an interest in gathering facts [109, 113] This, in turn, influences consumer spending. Previous research has provided empirical support for the significant influence ln social media's effect on propensity to adopt and buy Business 112, 114, 115, 116, 117. Accordingly, The hypothesis H1 was suggested. Hypothesis 1: Trust significantly affects the propensity to get via social buying and selling.

Second, **TRUST IN THE SELLER'S HONESTY**

A consumer's opinion of, or faith in, an organization's integrity that a commercial provider will provide as promised based on how impressive the product or service really is offer[ed] in the course of a commercial exchange [118]. When used with the social networking platforms, this indicates that a person's customers have faith in the social network vendor sites will adhere to the commitments made on social media. about the character and quality of offerings present [114]. A person's integrity might be defined as their vendor must follow certain basic rules and regulations dictated by the purchaser [109]. Integrity at the highest degree displayed by sellers/vendors in social commerce interaction is crucial in shaping how customers feel about the the credibility of the vendor, and therefore the buyer's desire to make a purchase from online social communities. Any dishonesty on the part of the other consumer's willingness to make a buy. while doing business via social networks. The results of these studies suggest that The vendor plays a crucial role in defining the acquisition intent. the role of social media in business [41, 114]. As a result, H2 was proposed. Hypothesis 2: Integrity significantly affects the motivation to acquisition in online social market

Three) The Seller's Expertise

One of the most important factors in deciding whether or not customers will have faith in a sale or vendor is the degree to which those customers perceive the seller to be knowledgeable, experienced, and trustworthy. [103], [119], When a buyer makes a purchase, he or she is placing faith in the seller's ability to provide the desired results [120]. or aid [121]. The vendor might also show off their expertise by product capabilities, features, and specifications [109]. Expert expert opinion from the vendor on the offered goods and services Whatever they provide via social commerce may persuade with the intent of buying products promoted on social media. The very important role that the seller's competence plays on the basis of evidence of a priori desire to buy the [41] and [114] investigations. In light of this, hypothesis 3 was proposed. Intention is greatly

influenced by competence (H3). to make a transaction using social media

4) THE SELLER'S GOOD WILL

Sellers' benevolence stems from the fact that they really communicate to socially active consumersexchange in business. With regards to the field of social media,n commercial transactions, the buyer and seller each recognise that: cares for him or her and will act accordingly (120) conduct harmful business practises that hurt customers. The generosity of the vendors is shown by their propensity to help. Providing assistance to the purchaser to ensure a smooth transaction business deals [109]. Previous research has shown that kindness on the part of the vendor correlates positively with user interest in making a purchase via social shopping [114]. Thus, the H4 hypothesis was put forth. H4: Goodwill greatly affects one's motives to make a transaction using social media

III. RESEARCH MODEL

Fig. 1 shows a diagram of the study's theoretical framework. The research model was constructed when the research hypotheses were established.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

WeChat is the name of the popular social networking app that was employed for this research. WeChat is China's most popular social networking platform. WeChat has become extremely popular in China, and many vendors and businesses are capitalising on this by advertising their wares on users' WeChat moments (timelines), where their friends and followers can get a sneak peek, read reviews, and share their recommendations. WeChat's monthly active user (MAU) count has topped 1.17 billion as of the first quarter of 2020. WeChat (Tencents instant messaging programme) has around 951 billion monthly active users, according to the most recent numbers as of January 2022 [134].
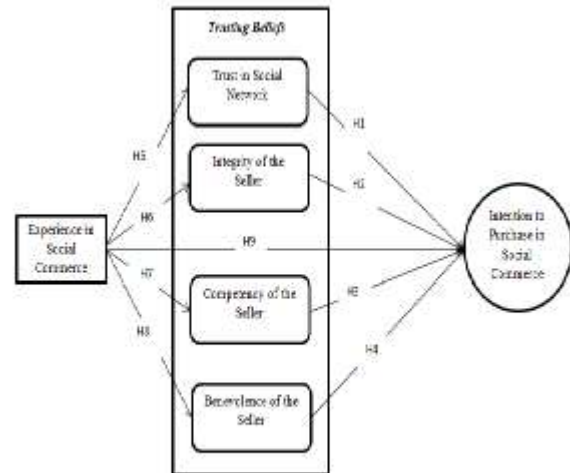

FIGURE 1. Research model.

The kind of sample and the available finances (budget) determine whether a survey is conducted face-to-face, via telephone interviews, or by self-administered questionnaires (which may be sent or posted online) [135], [137]. Valid, trustworthy, impartial, and discriminating data from a representative sample may be gathered with the use of questionnaire instruments[138], [139], [140]. Questionnaires are often used in research settings due to their low cost per response [141], [142] compared to other data gathering approaches.

Experience with social commerce [143] and purchase intent [144], [145], [146], trust in a social network [110], [112], [147], and seller integrity, seller competency, and seller benevolence [54], [114], [148] were all borrowed constructs used in the study's instrument. In Appendix 1 you will find a replica of the instrument. The survey questions were scored using a 5-point Likert scale, with extremes including "Strongly Disagree" (SD) and "Strongly Agree" (SA). For the benefit of the respondents who are Chinese nationals, the original English version of the instrument was adapted and then translated into Chinese. We enlisted the help of two English-speaking professors and two graduate students to complete the translations. A back-translation was performed to guarantee maximum accuracy

in the meaning and substance of the translation and to make sure that the translated version stayed true to the original intent. In addition to construct bias, procedure bias, and item bias, back translation is critical for evaluating the quality of the translated instrument.

We Chat was used to disseminate the URL to the website where the instrument was housed to a large number of responders. Teachers and students from Jiangxi University of Science & Technology disseminated it via private WeChat groups and accounts. When it comes to mobile communication in China, WeChat, created by the Tencent Company, is far and away the most popular option [153], [154]. Because of its widespread use among Chinese people, we were able to gather data more quickly, easily, and accurately using it. WeChat moments (which the vast majority of users regularly visit), voice and text messaging, group chatting, payments, games, etc. are just some of the many useful aspects of this programme. The duration of the administration was three months, from July 2020 to September 2020. After three months, 632 complete replies had been submitted. The data analysis was then conducted using the collected replies. The Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) approach was applied, with SPSS and AMOS serving as the statistical instruments.

Before beginning the statistical analysis, the CMB was performed. When using constructs (inde pendent and dependent) collected via the same questionnaire instrument, the CMB must be conducted. Harman's single-factor analysis was used to reach this conclusion; this method requires that no one factor explain more than 50% of the total variation [155, 156]. According to our analysis, no one factor explained more than 49.3% of the variation. This proves that CMB did not pose a problem for the results obtained in this investigation.

V. RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS
A. RESPONDENTSPROFILE

Table 1 displays the participants' evaluative profiles from the survey. Only 56% of those polled were male, while 43.8% were female. The most common age range was 26-30 years old (30.1%), while the least common was 41-50 years old (12.7%). Most had earned a master's degree (54 percent), followed by bachelor's (36 percent), and finally a doctorate (10 percent).

TABLE 1. Respondents profile.

Item	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	277	43.8
	Female	355	56.2
Age	18-25	103	16.3
	26-30	190	30.1
	31-40	143	22.6
	41-50	80	12.7
	50+	116	18.3
Education	Bachelors	228	36.0
	Masters	341	54.0
	Ph.D.	63	10.0

B. MODEL FOR MEASUREMENT

Standard Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and the exact model t (boot strapped based on statistical inference) were used in the modelling effort. A good value for SRMR is less than 0.08, as defined by [157], [158], which is the difference between the observed correlation and the correlation matrix indicated by the model. The normed t index (NFI) is an incremental t measure that assesses the suggested model by computing its Chi-square value and contrasting it with a relevant standard [159]. Values of NFI higher than 0.9 are considered suitable for a decent t. The exact model t examines the gap between the actual covariance matrix and the covariance matrix predicted by the composite factor model [160] using a statistical (bootstrap based) inference. Two methods for calculating the gap are the squared Euclidean distance (d_LS) and the geodesic distance (d_G) [161]. The empirical correlation matrix should be non-signi cant (p > 0.05) if the discrepancy between the underlying correlation matrix suggested by the model being tested and the actual correlation matrix is small

enough to be mostly attributable to sampling error [160]. It has been suggested that for excellent t [162], dULS and dG should be less than the 95% boot strapped quantile (HI95% of dULS and HI95% of dG). Both the SRMR (0.040) and NFI (0.948) were above 0.90. Moreover, the obtained dULS bootstrapped HI 95% of dULS and dG bootstrapped HI 95% of dG indicate that the measurement model provides a satisfactory t. After ensuring the measurement model was valid, we checked to see whether it was enough for measuring the constructs in question. Quality standard indicators including reliability, discriminant validity, and convergent validity were used to evaluate the measurement model's appropriateness. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were used to determine reliability, while average variance extracted was used to determine validity. The optimal range for factor loadings and AVE [[163], [164] is above 0.50. Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha should also be more than 0.70, as suggested by the literature [165, 166].

Table 2 shows that the measuring model of the constructs utilised in this investigation was satisfied after the suggested threshold estimated values for reliability and convergent validity were determined.

Discriminant validity was performed to ensure the constructs in this investigation were sufficiently robust. This was achieved first by using the Fornell-Larcker criteria, and then by using the cross-loadings norms. According to the guidelines, the square roots of the AVE must be greater than the interaction (correlation) between the paired components. Table 3 shows that the off-diagonal estimations are larger than the square root of AVE (diagonal) values. In addition, the criteria for crossing loadings require that the loadings of all individual constructions be larger than the cross-loadings (total). The measurements and scales employed in this research have been determined to have discriminant validity because they meet these two criteria. The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) was used to further validate the discriminating validity.

TABLE 2. Measurement model.

Constructs	Code	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Experience in Social Commerce	ESC1 ESC2 ÈSC2	.954 .927 .948	.952	.960	.889
Trust in Social Network	TSN1 TSN2 TSN3	.908 .979 .948	.964	.972	.920
Integrity of the Seller	IS1 IS2 IS3	.923 .945 .921	.934	.964	.901
Competency of the Seller	CS1 CS2 CS3	.965 .949 .973	.924	.974	.916
Benevolence of the Seller	BS1 BS2 BS3	.958 .977 .908	.912	.964	.899
Intention to Purchase in Social Commerce	ITPSC1 ITPSC2 ITPSC3	.943 .985 .941	.937	.970	.915

TABLE 3. Discriminant validity.

Item	ESC	TSN	BS	CS	IS	ITPSC
ESC	**.943**					
TSN	.686	**.859**				
BS	.559	.546	**.948**			
CS	.781	.667	.641	**.862**		
IS	.683	.769	.543	.464	**.949**	
ITPSC	.586	.681	.672	.570	.775	**.857**

Note: Bold indicates (diagonal) square root of AVE. Experience in Social Commerce (SC), Trust in Social Networks (TSN), Integrity of the Seller (IS), Competency of the Seller (CS), Benevolence of the Seller (BS), Intention to Purchase in Social Commerce (ITPSC)

TABLE 4. Discriminant validity of Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT).

Item	ESC	TSN	BS	CS	IS	ITPSC
ESC	-					
TSN	0.713	-				
BS	0.742	0.699	-			
CS	0.689	0.719	0.820	-		
IS	0.797	0.728	0.811	0.654	-	
ITPSC	0.801	0.799	0.733	0.741	0.786	-

Experience in Social Commerce (SC), Trust in Social Networks (TSN), Integrity of the Seller (IS), Competency of the Seller (CS), Benevolence of the Seller (BS), Intention to Purchase in Social Commerce (ITPSC)

TABLE 5. Structural model (hypothesis).

Hypotheses	Path			β	T-Value	Sign	Supported
H1	TSN	→	ITPSC	.310	8.076	***	Yes
H2	IS	→	ITPSC	.161	4.717	***	Yes
H3	CS	→	ITPSC	.069	2.005	.195	No
H4	BS	→	ITPSC	.330	17.356	***	Yes
H5	ESC	→	TSN	.686	147.740	***	Yes
H6	ESC	→	IS	.683	134.120	***	Yes
H7	ESC	→	CS	.481	126.770	***	Yes
H8	ESC	→	BS	.559	85.552	***	Yes
H9	ESC	→	ITPSC	.139	4.172	***	Yes

Notes: *** $p < 0.05$, Experience in Social Commerce (SC), Trust in Social Networks (TSN), Integrity of the Seller (IS), Competency of the Seller (CS), Benevolence of the Seller (BS), Intention to Purchase in Social Commerce (ITPSC)

Table 4 displays the outcomes. If the HTMT values are more than 0.85 or 0.90, according to the HTMT principle, then there is a problem with discriminatory validity[167], [168].All values obtained were smaller than the 0.85 or 0.90 criteria required by the HTMT, as shown in Table 5. This means that there is no issue of discriminatory validity in the data.

C.STRUCTURALMODEL

Table5 and Fig.2 both display the findings of the structural model run.Trust in social networks (0.310, p0.05) and seller integrity (=0.161, p 0.05) were shown to have a direct and substantial effect on buy intent in social commerce. Thus, both H1 and H2 were confirmed. Moreover, in social commerce, buyer intent was not significantly influenced by the seller's expertise.However, the seller's kindness was a significant predictor of buy intent in social commerce (beta = 0.33, p 0.05). As a result, we may say that H4 was supported but H3 was not. In addition, we found that personal characteristics like confidence in social networks and prior experience in social commerce were significantly influenced by the former. Competence of the seller (beta = 0.683, p 0.05) and honesty of the seller (C*beta = 0.686, p 0.05) Positive seller attitudes (beta = 0.559, p 0.05) and an interest in making a transaction all play a role in social commerce.As a result, hypotheses 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were all accepted.

D. Mediation Evaluations (Post-Mortem)

To further understand the model's underlying mediation effect, a post hoc analysis was conducted utilising 5000 bootstrapping samples with 95% confidence intervals (CI) [169], [170]. The connection between a consumer's prior experience with social commerce (ESC) and their desire to engage in future ESC transactions is moderated by a number of factors, including the consumer's trust in the seller's honesty, expertise, and generosity. The mediation effects were examined in three stages: first, the impact of the IV on the mediators (path-P1), second, the impact of the mediators on the dependents (path-P2), and third, the path from the IV to the DVs (path-P3 or / P3' including both paths P1 and P2). The presence of complete or partial mediation was determined by consulting the CI for P3'. The principle states that a complete mediating effect exists if and only if both P1 and P2 are non-zero and P3' is zero. However, a minor mediating effect occurs if both P1P2 and P3' are non-zero [171], [172]. Table 6 shows that TSN, IS, CS, and BS each play a role in mediating the relationship between social commerce experience and social commerce

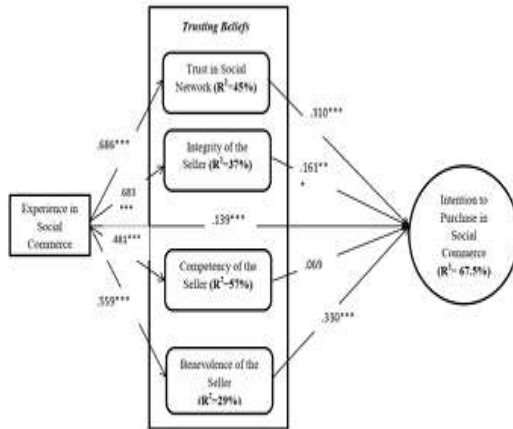purchase intention (as well as the total, direct, and indirect effects of these variables).

FIGURE 2. Validated structural model.

TABLE 6. Mediation test.

IV	M	Total effect	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Mediation tests (P1P2) 95%-CI		Zero included	Mediation test (P3') 95%-CI		Zero included	Nature of Mediation
					Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper		
ESC	TSN	0.412***		0.515**	0.124	0.259	No	0.056	0.189	No	Partial
	IS	0.635***	0.715**	0.273**	0.077	0.194	No	0.048	0.137	No	Partial
	CS	0.845**		0.510**	0.156	0.346	No	0.156	0.291	No	Partial
	BS	0.621**		0.374*	0.103	0.298	No	0.012	0.309	No	Partial

Experience in Social Commerce (ESC), Trust in Social Networks (TSN), Integrity of the Seller (IS), Competency of the Seller (CS), and Benevolence of the Seller (BS). IV (independent variable), M (mediator), P1, P2, P3, and P3' (path coefficients), CI (Confident Interval), ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, * $p < 0.05$

●

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to determine what variables impact Chinese customers' decisions to make purchases via social media platforms. According to the study's findings, Chinese consumers' propensity to engage in social commerce is heavily influenced by their level of confidence in their social networks, the honesty and transparency of the seller, and the generosity of the seller. Contrary to our predictions, the investigation showed that customers' decisions to buy via social commerce are unaffected by the seller's competence. This finding that the seller's expertise has no bearing on prospective buyers' decisions in social commerce runs counter to and provides no support for the findings of previous research that have shown that the seller's expertise is an important and significant predictor of the decision to buy. [41], [114]. If a buyer is on the fence about making a purchase on a social commerce platform, they should consider the seller's expertise in relation to the product or service being offered. However, the increased levels of customers' deep information about items and services they Durchase on social commerce may explain for its non-influence in influencing consumer buy choices. In addition, customers are better equipped to make buying choices (competence evaluations) because to the widespread access to information sharing and knowledge management made possible by the many forms of distributed sharing in the social commerce setting. Consumers benefit from social commerce technology because it gives them access to a wider range of options and puts them in the driver's seat [173], [174]. Consumers are better able to fulfil their own requirements and make informed purchasing decisions via social commerce, saving time, money, and resources in the process [175]. [176]. [177]. Customers' self-determination and self-efficacy are fueled by the empowerment generated by social commerce, which can occur through

retooling one's identity and personality (interaction/sharing with others, learning, and testing of skills) and improving self-efficacy skills [178], [179], [180].

This research also looked at whether or not a buyer's past interactions with a business on social media had any effect on their perceptions of the business's trustworthiness, integrity, competence, and generosity. The investigation shows that the consumer's experience significantly influenced the aforementioned four elements. That's because the knowledge they gain from their interactions on social commerce platforms helps them determine whether or not 1) a given social commerce site can be trusted, 2) the seller's integrity can be relied upon, 3) the seller's competence can be relied upon, and 4) the seller's benevolence can be relied upon based on the kindness they've witnessed. There is a correlation between the quality of the customer's experience and their level of contentment with their purchase, according to prior research [114, 188, 189]. Personal experience has been shown to have a beneficial effect on future purchases [56], [190]. However, this research makes a novel attempt to test the impact of seller experience on trust, honesty, competence, and generosity in the setting of social commerce. The literature on the spread of e-commerce and social commerce may now benefit from this study.

A. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

This research adds to what is already known about the intersection of e-commerce and social commerce. To begin, this research did not make use of the key components of the Technology Adoption Model (TAM) when applied to e-commerce and social commerce, such as perceived utility and perceived simplicity of use. As a result, it's clear that these two TAM variables aren't the only things that matter when it comes to consumers' adoption decisions when engaging with innovative technologies like social commerce. In addition, 67.5% of the variance in social commerce may be attributed to differences in consumers' intents to make a transaction. This suggests that confidence in a social network, the integrity of the seller, the seller's expertise, and the seller's generosity account for 67.5% of the variables affecting Chinese consumers' choices to participate in social commerce. Trust in a social network, integrity of the seller, competence of the seller, and kindness of the seller in social commerce were each accounted for by the consumer's experience in using social commerce at 45%, 37%, 57%, and 29%. The study's use of TAM and SET together contributes to a deeper understanding of the interplay between technology and human interaction at the heart of social commerce. According to the SET, the breakdown of exchanges in the social commerce system occurs when stimuli are not returned in kind, leading to an imbalance in the interaction process. In addition, since SET is predicated on social interaction, it follows that customers should work to cultivate relationships with one another in the hopes that doing so will benefit both parties, lead to increased opportunities for mutually beneficial exchange, and foster ongoing, meaningful exchanges within social commerce networks. The non-significance of the seller's integrity on consumers' purchasing choices in social commerce is

only one area that may be further investigated and improved upon thanks to these contributions.

APPLICATIONS IN PRACTISE

This factor of trust may play a crucial role on the virtual commerce platform, as shown by the verified strong influence of trust in social networks on customers' purchasing choices in social commerce. This implies that the primary participants (buyers and sellers) on the social commerce platform need to take actions that increase confidence among its users. In order for social marketplaces to function well, they must guarantee truthfulness in price and product quality, as well as complete disclosure of relevant details between buyers and sellers. These, if handled correctly, have the potential to affect consumers' confidence in social commerce and, in turn, their propensity to make purchases in this setting. Consumers' trust in social media infrastructures may be strengthened via the development of secure online clients, data transmission, web servers, and web operating systems.

Furthermore, we have shown that the consumer's experience with social commerce directly influences the evaluation of the seller's trustworthiness, honesty, expertise, and generosity. Consequently, shoppers will be better able to determine whether or not a certain social network/commerce site can be trusted the more experience they have with social commerce. That is, people can tell whether they'll be able to get their hands on a service or product by how often they use it. They learn via experience whether or not a vendor can be trusted to provide the promised goods or services. In addition, savvy buyers know from previous transactions whether or not a vendor is competent and well-versed in the offered goods and services. Finally, with good UX, you can figure out whether a vendor really gives a hoot about their customers. Consumers and users of social commerce are urged to gather sufficient experience via more participation or contact on social commerce sites to ascertain the amount of trust, honesty, competence, and kindness present in social commerce.

CONCLUSION

There are areas where further research is needed because of the limitations of this study. The sample size may not be typical, and as a consequence, the findings should not be extrapolated beyond the study's participants. Thirdly, it is hard for a single article (research) to investigate all the elements driving the adoption of social commerce. Thus, future research should investigate the factors (performance, financial, security/privacy) that influence consumers' decisions to keep making purchases via social commerce. Moreover, the role of trusting beliefs (sellers' competence, honesty, and compassion) in mitigating the effect of these perceived risk characteristics on the uptake of social commerce may be investigated.

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