A Review of Online Social Network Hypotheses for Business Continuance Intention

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Abstract—Online Social Networks (OSN) have come butcould not survive, yet the explosion of business activities on such platforms continuous to surge high, giving advantage to the bold entrepreneurs. It is therefore a practical requirement that practitioners and researchers understand the key determinants of costumers' online social network business activities and continuance intention. An exploratory literature research to examine OSN continuous intention of business participants on OSN revealed that the practice of doing business on social network has come to stay and the following factors are the likely drivers for this new business model: perceived trust, perceived ease of use, confirmation, Habit, social norm, perceived behavioural control, expected benefit and satisfaction are the most probable factor that can lead to online social network (OSN) continuance intention.This paper throws light on the above listed OSN influencing factors and the likely emanating model.

Keywords—**Business, Continuance intention, Expectation-confirmation theory, Online social network, Participants**.

I. INTRODUCTION

THERE has been a tremendous revolution in the field of technology in recent years, giving rise to many innovative and ground-breaking mode of doing business. Inclusive of this phenomenon is the OSN. OSN is a web 2.0 technology whereby people confluence for a common agenda, from meeting old friends to creating new ones and conducting business, and has become a $1.8 billion industry, currently having 246 social media sites/networks up and running [32], and considered the fourth most popular activity on the Internet [18], meaning that more than 66% of the global on-line population visit and participate in social networks and blogs. More than 85% of internet users all over the world have made at least one online purchase [32] and the most visited site in the world, with over 500 million subscribed users to date is a social network site- face book.

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are virtual communities where users can create individual public profiles, interact with real-life friends, and meet other people based on shared interests [32]. [21] defined social networking sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public

or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection with, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.The growth of OSNs, in terms of membership and use, has been very impressive overjust few years. For instance, it is reported that 39% of adults (30 above) using internet currently use social networking sites and one out of four such adults on a typical day, visit OSNs [24]. It is worth noting that this OSN phenomenon is currently being investigatedby a lot of researchers in social sciences and information systems, and the

private sectorsare also trying to investigate OSNs in order to learn about upcoming lifestyles that may affect traditional business models [15]. What is critical about OSN and hence this paper, is the potential business opportunity that such a phenomenon presents in a different form to all in an information age.

II. DIFFERENT TYPES OF SOCIAL NETWORKS:

Social networking comes in many forms which can be broken up into many categories and most fall into more than one category. Knowing what category a network is classified; we believe is important to plan out a social media campaign strategy to have a successful result.

A. Blogs

Blogs were one of the first forms of social media and have really evolved. Blogs are designed to allow easy content posting, and also easy commenting and sharing. Examples of blogging services are: WordPress, Type Pad and Blogger. They are special types of websites that usually display date-stamped entries in reverse chronological order [57], and customers who for one reason or another are dissatisfied with a company's offerings may decide to engage in virtual complaints in the form of protest websites or blogs [58]

B. Social Networking Services

Social Networking Services are of such high popularity especially among younger internet users [27, 28] though several companies are already using social networking sites to support the creation of brand communities [51] or for marketing research in the context of netnography [50]. They were originally created for the soul purpose of two way communications and content sharing, e.g. videos, picture and information. Even with this category, are three sub-categories: Full networks (Facebook/Googl), Micro blogging (Twitter/Plurk) and Professional Networks (Linkedin/Xing).

C. Social Media Sharing Services / Content communities

Social media sharing services are based around posting content such as videos and pictures, and sharing the content and also commenting on it. The main objective is the sharing of media content between users who are not required to create a personal profile page; if they do, these usually contain basic information, such as date they joined and the number of videos shared [27, 28]. There are three types of these networks, video (YouTube/Vimeo), Photos (Flickr/Picasa), Audio (Podcast Alley). Users of social bookmarking services can bookmark their favorite pages for other users of that network to see and enjoy. Recommendation sites (Stumble Upon/Delicious), Social Shopping (Kaboodle/This Next).

D. Collaborative projects

This enables the joint and simultaneous creation of content by many end-users. The main idea for this project is that the joint effort of many actors' leads to a better outcome than any actor could achieve individually. Exemplary applications within this category are online encyclopedia Wikipedia, available in more than 230 different languages [28].

E. Virtual game worlds

Virtual worlds are platforms that replicate a three dimensional environment in which users can appear in the form of personalized avatars and interact with each other as they would in real life. In this sense, virtual worlds are probably the ultimate manifestation of Social Media, as they provide the highest level of social presence and media richness of all applications discussed thus far. Examples of virtual game worlds include the cod-medieval ''World of Warcraft,'' which counts around 8.5 million subscribers who explore the virtual planet of Azeroth in the form of humans, dwarves, orcs, or night elves, to fight monsters or to search for treasure; and Sony's EverQuest, in which 16 different races of players (e.g., wizards, clerics) travel the fantasy world of Norrath[27].

F. Virtual social worlds

The second group of virtual worlds, often referred to as virtual social worlds, allows inhabitants to choose their behaviour more freely and essentially live a virtual life similar to their real life. As in virtual game worlds, virtual social world users appear in the form of avatars and interact in a three-dimensional virtual environment; however, in this realm, there are no rules restricting the range of possible interactions, except for basic physical laws such as gravity. This allows for an unlimited range of self-presentation strategies, and it has been shown that with increasing usage intensity and consumption experience, users of virtual social worlds—or ''residents,'' as they prefer to be called——show behavior that more and more closely mirrors the one observed in real life settings [23, 27, 28]. Arguably, the most prominent example of virtual social worlds is the Second Life application, founded and managed by the San Francisco-based company: Linden Research Inc.

[21], concluded that although differences exist between Social Networking Sites, they are all considered to be social networking sites and continues by stating that when these websites are evaluated on their purpose and technology; it is possible to make three categories where one can choose vendors to deal with: virtual world, sharing communities andgeneral communities.

III. CHOICE OF SUPPLIER

In these days where there are hundreds of OSNs which seems to have some king of business platform for their participants, probably the most challenging issue faced by buyers is the selection of the appropriate supplier. There are many reasons for limiting the number of preferred suppliers on this platform, with the ability to work with suppliers at all stages of on the OSN supply chain as this is important factor to the consumer participant. Pressure to purchase locally, environmental concerns, product availability, and other factors also influence buyers' decisions [56] and these influences may cause suppliers to be used regardless of the degree of product, performance, or interpersonal satisfaction derived from that supplier.

As [49] pointed out, reliance on codified knowledge stresses formal analysis and rationality in decision making. Analogously, product satisfaction and performance satisfaction rely on rational analysis while interpersonal satisfaction relies on tacit knowledge. Such tacit knowledge may be developed through years of experience, is subjective, and is highly individualized [17]. It may also be influenced especially, in the advents of e-commerce these days and may include knowledge about efficient ways of approaching suppliers online. Participants of OSN may succumb to pressure from peers to buy online and may not be aware that they are applying tacit knowledge in their decisions [17]. It is proposed here that decision makers use satisfaction, and especially interpersonal satisfaction, as a form of tacit knowledge in the decision making process for continuance purchases as a driving force for choosing among otherwise acceptable alternatives.

Since overall customer satisfaction is comprised of satisfaction with multiple aspects of the acquisition and use of a product or service, the model shows that the component parts of overall satisfaction plays the major roles in the decision of whether or not to repurchase from particular suppliers. The components of overall satisfaction examined in this research include the following: satisfaction with the product itself including product performance and styling (product satisfaction), satisfaction with the supplier's performance including on-time performance and billing accuracy (performance satisfaction), and satisfaction with the relationship with the individual salesperson (interpersonal satisfaction). In this model, if several suppliers have met the minimum criteria on product satisfaction, performance satisfaction will then be used as a secondary selection criterion.

IV. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

A. Expectation-confirmation theory (ECT)

Research into online social network and e-commerce studies has revealed that online shopping behaviour has been studied using constructs such as users' continuance, acceptance decisions, online shopping intention and purchase behaviour. Bhattacherjee et al., made a substantial contribution in using ECT to study individual user satisfaction and continuance behaviour [10],[12] conducted a research to investigate cognitive beliefs and affect including IS users` intention to continue using IS.
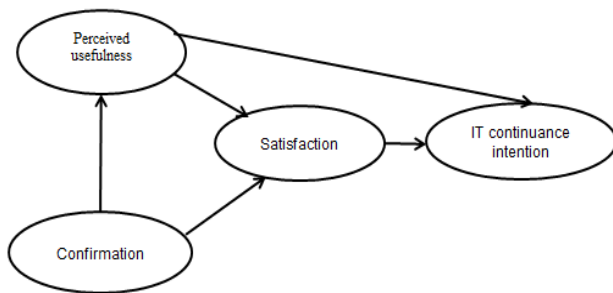
B. Figure 1 Expected Confirmation Theory [10]

This IS continuance model was empirically validated using field survey of online banking users, and the results shows that IS continuance intention is determined by their satisfaction and perceived usefulness of continued IS use [38],[41]. User satisfaction is in turn influenced by their confirmation of expectation from prior IS use and perceived usefulness. The following hypotheses are therefore deduced:

H1: A customer`s satisfaction of OSN site positively determines a customer`s OSN continuance intention

H2: A customer`s confirmation of OSN site positively affects a customer`s OSN shopping satisfaction

H3: Confirmation of expectations positively affects expected benefit of OSN usage.

C. Trust

Trust, according to Bianchi and Andrew [13],"makes consumers comfortable sharing personal information, making purchases, and acting on web vendor advice, all of which are behaviours essential to widespread adoption of e-commerce". The issue of trust is very important when it comes to business, let alone conducting such business in an environment where participant do not see each other. Therefore, an understanding of the influence of trust is critical to both researchers and practitioners [31]. Trust is an intentional psychological factor that influences user satisfaction or customers' intention because trust is what we do. Trust is the manifestations of ones believe in thoughts and actions. For example, trust says Twitter OSN can be used for business activities and one will use Twitter to transact business and it is a very important

elementof OSN. Trust has received an affirmative statement in relation to online business. For instance,Bianchi and Andrew [13], made a profound statement that trust "makes consumers comfortable sharing personal information, making purchases, and acting on web vendor advice, all of which are behaviours essential to widespread adoption of e-commerce" OSN is not exception for such behaviours which will certainly ensure the phenomenon for commercial activities.

Several studies have focused on various issues of trust in e-commerce [26], [30],[16], [37] and evidence appears to suggest that consumer trust in the online vendor has a positive relationship with attitudes towards purchasing on OSN, hence, the below hypothesis:

H4: A customer`s perceived trust in OSN will strongly affects a customer`s OSN confirmation.

D. Habit

Prior research in IT usage indicates that Habit determines much of IT continued usage (Kim, 2009, Kang et al., 2009, Cho et al., 2009). Defined as "a well–learned action sequence, originally intentional, that may be repeated as it was learned without conscious intention, when triggered by environmental cues in a table context" [23]. When IT use is habitual, it ceases to be guided by conscious planning and is instead triggered by specific environmental cues in an unthinking or automatic manner [11],[23] maintained that the mere presence of IT or a specific task that a user is confronted with, say to communicate with a colleague about writing a report, are important cues that may trigger habitual IT usage. Previous research has found a strong relationship between habit and continuance behaviour in IS, and many efforts have been made by different researchers in showing how habit influence IT usage and the conclusion is almost invariable the same. Understanding the IS feature that develops habitual behaviours among OSN participants is crucial in promoting habitual use of OSN in the long run. In light of the above, we hypothesize that:

H5: A customer`s habit has a direct positive effect on IT continuance intention.

E. Expected benefits, perceived ease of use and satisfaction

In this model, expected benefits (EB) and PEOU are considered the basic utilitarian factors in participants' online business intention. In the context of OSN for business transactions, expected benefit in this model refers to the extent to which a participant perceives that doing business on OSN will improve his or her business experience. PEOU in this paper is defined as the extent to which an OSN participant perceives the ease of interaction with the OSN site and is able to receive the product or service information that he or she needs. Many researchers concluded, both theoretically and empirically, that the easy use of technology will lead to peoples' perception of usefulness [33], [40],[34]. Therefore, PEOU has an essential effect on PB. When consumers find it easy to interact with OSN sites, to search product and service

information, and to do business online, they will consider OSN more useful. Expected benefit is a term suggested to replace perceived usefulness in his new model [11] and defined it as "user`s perception of expected benefit of IS use". Satisfaction on the other hand, has been defined by [35]as "an affective state that is the emotional reaction to a product or a service experience". In the field of IS continuance model, the relationship between perceived usefulness and satisfaction is supported by a lot of research findings [17], [19], [39], [35].
The following hypotheses can evidently be stated following the sources stated above.

H6: Costumers' perceived ease of use of OSN is positively related to Expected Benefit of OSN for business transactions.

H7: A customer`s Expected benefit of OSN positively affect a customer`s satisfaction of OSN usage

H8: A customer`s Expected benefit of OSN positively determines continued intention of OSN for business.

F. Behavioural control and social (subjective) norm
One well known and applied model that has been used extensively to explain the impacts of the behavioural decision-making process by identifying the important predictors of individuals' behaviour is the theory of planned behaviour.
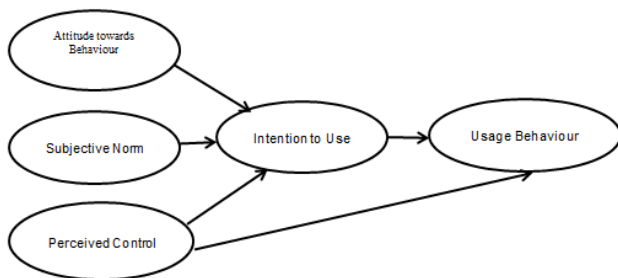
G.Figure 2: The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)[7]

The TPB posits that individuals' intentions are the closest determinants of their behaviour, with intention as a concept to capture individuals' motivation to perform a given behaviour [14], [36]. Ajzen`s [8] theory of planned behaviour was recently applied to social networking by Baker and White, [9] who conducted a study examining use of the theory to predict adolescents` use of social networking. The study confirmed the TPBs components of attitude, perceived behavioural control, and group norms in predicting intentions to use social networking sites. They then found support that intention predicts behaviour. To test the efficacy of the above findings, the following hypotheses were made:

H9: Perceived behavioural control positively affects OSN continuance intention.

H10: Social norm positively affects OSN continuance intention.

From the forgone literature review and hypotheses, we summarise very close works of various authors who used relevant theories in similar studies.

Table 1: Closely related and accessible works

control, expected benefit and satisfaction were the factors likely to

Based on the above discussed literature this paper comes up with the below online social network continuance intention index (OSNCII). Habit, social norm, perceived behavioural

have significant impact on OSN continuance intention (OSNCI). Perceived ease of use impacted expected benefit, whiles perceived trust impacted confirmation and confirmation affected satisfaction.

Figure 3: Proposed OSN Continuance Intention Index (OSNCII)

VI. CONCLUSION

Authors (Year)	Respondents and Countries	Actual Outcomes
[2]	260 field survey of online SNS users	Perceived usefulness (PU), ease-of-use (EU), satisfaction (SAT), trust, social norm (SN) among others influence continuance intentions (CI)
[7]	465 e-shoppers via online survey of internet shoppers in Saudi Arabia.	The findings confirm that PU, enjoyment and social pressure are determinants of e-shopping continuance intentions
[4]	Primary and secondary data. Bangladesh.	Online purchase intention and its continuity depend on attitude of customer influenced by trust or belief on onlineShopping.
[6]	397 valid samples from online questionnaires	Shopping websites' introduction of I-CRM positively affects relationship quality, while relationship quality positively influences repurchase intention.
[3]	234 valid cases of primary data using paper-based questionnaire.	The confirmation of initial expectations regarding online buying is the main predictor of online consumers` (CONs) SAT and online CONs` PU of online buying.
[5]	196 usable responses from cross-sectional field survey of online group-buying consumers.	Consumers' SAT with prior use and PU positively influence consumers' CI. Consumers' SAT is determined primarily by CONs` confirmation of expectation and perceived e-recovery service quality.
[1]	98 valid responses via a web-based questionnaire	Main determinants of CONs' intention to continue buying online are post-purchase SAT and CONs' PU of online buying.
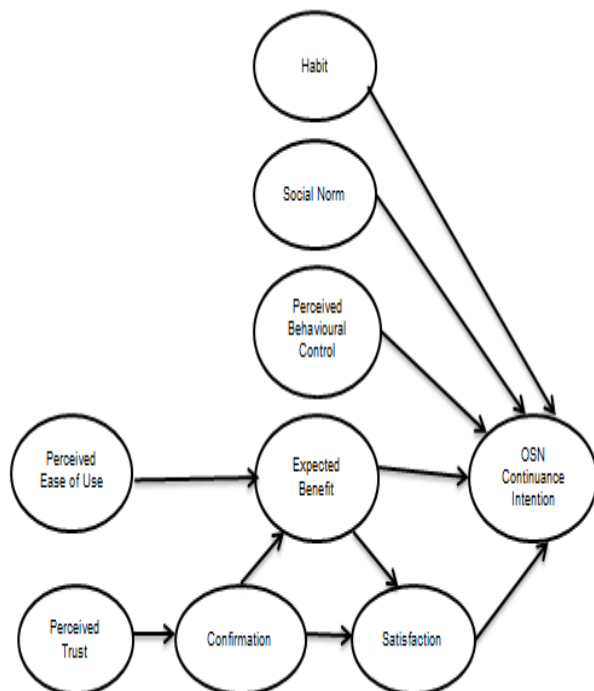
Reviewing relevant literature proved to be quiet difficult as Social Networking phenomenon are quite recent development and academic literature has not explored all aspects. In addition to the fact that many sources of reference are not academic based and thus could not be used, this resulted in a time consuming search for relevant literature.

The advancement of information communication and technologies (ICT) has enabled OSN participants to compare products, services and their related prices. In general information online and the possibility of information exchange and scanning regarding their OSN shopping experiences, prevent them from trading with a vendor if they find other vendors offering cheaper and better deals. Online business is

gaining greater strategic importance but what is more intriguing to investigate is the factors that compel OSN participants to participate and in this new way of trading and determines their future continuance behaviour. Researchers such as Bhattacherjee, Tsai, Nour and Mouakket have argued that satisfaction is the more important requiremen

determining a user's intention for continued use, however in terms of business, this argument could be different. Social norm, Perceived usefulness and trust could play more prominent role than mere satisfaction.

Future research to concretise these assertions is therefore required to help both practitioners and researchers have a common direction for future policies. This will promote sustainability of OSN platforms because it seems to have come to stay for the foreseeable future.

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