

CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY, ISLAMABAD



**The Impact of Social Commerce  
Design on Purchase Decision  
Making with the Mediation effect  
of Information search and  
Moderation of Evaluation**

by

**Shahzad Mahmood**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the  
degree of Master of Science

in the

Faculty of Management & Social Sciences

Department of Management Sciences

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*This dissertation work is dedicated with love and affection to my loving Parents and sisters. This journey wouldnt have been possible without your loving support and encouragement.*



## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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## *Abstract*

This study investigated the impact of social commerce design on purchase decision making. Further, mediating role of information sharing between social commerce design aspect and purchase decision making was also investigated. In addition to this, mediator and moderator has also been investigated between information sharing and purchase decision making. In this study cross sectional data were collected by seeking help of tourist operators of twin cities of Pakistan. Data of respondents was analyzed by using SPSS. Finding suggests that Social commerce design aspect have significant and positive effect on purchase decision making, while information sharing mediated the relation between variables. Moreover, moderating variable evaluation, weakens the relation between information sharing and purchase decision making. Such findings has implication for researchers and practitioners.

**Keywords:** Social Commerce Design, Usability Factors, Functional Factors, Social Factors, Information Sharing, Evaluation and Purchase Decision Making.



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# Abbreviations

EV	Evaluation
FF	Functional Factors
IS	Information Sharing
PDM	Purchase Decision Making
SCD	Social Commerce Design
SF	Social Factors
UF	Usability Factor

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The substantial use of internet has changed the method of doing business. Now a days, escalation of social media provoking more and more enthusiasm among customers. Two-third of the companies are using social media to encourage customers for their brands and services (Karamian, Nadoushan, & Nadoushan, 2015). Mostly customers prefer online shopping now a days and social commerce design capture them which leads towards purchase decision. Firms are becoming dynamic with service intervention having personnel which are available to sort out the problems of their customers (Karamian et al., 2015). This new furtherance commonly alluded as a social commerce (Hajli, 2014).

The idea of social commerce was presented by Yahoo in 2005 (Rubel, 2005). Later on, major web organization like Amazon.com, Groupon.com and eBay.com commence proceeding advantages of client involvement and they adopted the method to enhance values, consequently added expeditious growth of social commerce.

The expression social commerce alluded to the distribution of e-commerce exercises, administrations and exchanges by using internet based environments, most of the time by using social networks and sometimes through engaging Web 2.0 program (Huang & Benyoucef, 2015). In marketing domain, factors which control

social commerce triumph becoming a topic of vehement debate in this field (Liang et al., 2011).

Social commerce taken as a division of web based business. In the past researchers has extensively represent it by two imperative components social media and commercial activities, but an intensive observation in the literature recognize that the concept of social commerce is embedded by different contradictoriness. Furthermore, according to Stephen and Toubia (2010) social commerce is a type of Internet-based online networking which empowers people to participate in showcasing and selling the item.

Recently, different examinations have tended the structure of electronic commerce business application frameworks and recognized wide scope of various plan highlights. For instance, C. Liu and Arnett (2000) distinguished few essential elements of electronic commerce websites. Such elements involve quality information, quality service, supportiveness, quality design of system, and uses of system.

C. Liu and Arnett (2000) argues that a proper-arranged website promptly enhance review of customer and acknowledgement reasonable behavior toward the website and its products. Information system and well-designed marketing system relates with better designed websites. Due to this reason, the literature which is relevant from these two areas are appropriate for a research structure in this study.

E-commerce in tourism and hospitality created towards an improved condition as of late from the prefatory offers of less-complex items, for example, the tickets for carrier, facilities and vehicle rentals, to present progressively complex items like excursion bundles and travels (Beldona, Morrison, & OLeary, 2005; Inversini & Masiero, 2014; Nusair & Parsa, 2011). Website design and better navigations enhance shopping pleasure (Floh & Madlberger, 2013).

Recently, the societal part of electronic commerce design has been risen like a vital idea (Huang & Benyoucef, 2015) and this idea featured the significance of Web 2.0 software and online communities. Social commerce design is also a distribution channel for a company to communicate with the world (Nathan & Yeow, 2009). Customers visit the website if they intent to purchase whereas customers can easily commute to another website to recuperate required product by a single click.



Usability is the most important factor of the website design, if a website design is of poor quality than customers are more likely to switch on another website. Accordingly Tilson, Dong, Martin, and Kieke (1998) argues that web interface needs customization to potentiate the usability of website.

Information sharing has been used as mediator in this study. Information sharing refers the complacent of Web site should be precise, and perfect. Information sharing is quite different on social commerce websites, customers focuses on sharing this kind of information to their friends in social commerce environment, whereas in e-commerce customers review shared to the online shoppers, and on the basis of these reviews customers intent to make purchase decision (Liang et al., 2011). Customers evaluates the information and quality delivered by social commerce. Information sharing is thus an essential element in social commerce with an emphasis on content which leads customers to purchase decision.

Social commerce offers appropriate searching (Hansen & Olsen, 2006). Social commerce endue customers to give their opinions (Prasad et al., 2017). Now a-days social commerce is an important tool for consumer to get ample information about company or product. Even enough literature is available for the design of social commerce and purchase decision making but there are still gaps in social commerce literature and our study intended to make several contribution in the marketing literature, first it will examine customer interconnect by using social commerce as a platforms, create linkages between users perception and make purchase decision about a particular product (Huang & Benyoucef, 2017).

Secondly our study examine the mediating role of information sharing among the design of social commerce and purchase decision making behavior. Findings of this study would be worthy for advancement and effectiveness of such websites, which would be useful for a variety of consumer (Huang & Benyoucef, 2017).

The accelerated growth in social commerce over the past few years has become a reason for the social interaction (Ng, 2013), and such kind of interaction leads towards sharing a pool of information which causes awareness.

This study examines the proposed relationships of social commerce design and purchase decision making with the mediating effect of information sharing and

moderating effect of evaluation, by examining these novel relations this study extends the marketing literature (Huang & Benyoucef, 2017), with these relationships we can find out the stimulating factors those have ability to stimulate the buying behavior of consumers. Secondly, it introduces a new mediating relationship between information sharing and purchase decision making by studying evaluation. This is very crucial variable, because on the previous beliefs and on the basis of cognition individuals create intention to buy something and then go for ultimate purchase decision as a response.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Regardless, the research is increasing on social commerce design, however little consideration has been devoted to understanding ease of usability factors, functional factor and social factor of social commerce design which influence the purchase decision making behavior. Accordingly researchers (e.g. Huang and Benyoucef (2017) argued there is still need to examine these design facets of social commerce influence the purchase decision making behavior.

Present study inspect the intervening impact of information sharing among social business structure and purchase decision making, and evaluation overcomes gap as a mediator between information sharing and purchase decision making, because evaluation process is an integral part of purchase decision making (Kim & Im, 2018).

Past studies on the aspects of proposed variables (Huang & Benyoucef, 2015) were conducted in European countries so the results might be different in Asian countries because it seems possible that in countries like Pakistan use of social commerce is very limited (Talat et al., 2013). Pakistan is an Asian country and so for no study has been analyzed the outcome of social commerce design on purchase decision making. Present study examines mediating role of information sharing and moderating effect of evaluation between the above mentioned relationships.

### 1.3 Gap Analysis

In the previous studies purchase decision have been observed under the influence of personal, psychological and environmental factors, these are the factors which have potential to dominant purchase decision because in the context of each consumer driving forces are different toward different needs and wants. Moreover consumer behavior demographics and cultural variables were the main focus and it carries some limitations with it (Schiffman et al., 2010; Singh & Pandey, 2012; Solomon, 2011).

This study extends the literature about persons interaction with social commerce platforms which leads towards ultimate purchase decision and to what extent different aspects of social commerce design influence the consumer.

Studies that examined the topic of personality are limited in marketing literature. Focal point of this study is to analyze the relationship of social commerce design and effect of its different aspects on purchase decision making in which information sharing plays vital roles as mediator and evaluation plays a role of moderator.

The most recent study done on the social commerce design and its impact on consumer purchase decision making process, was an experimental study and Huang and Benyoucef (2017) addressed how social commerce design dominant the whole mechanism of purchase decision making process, they addressed how consumer becomes aware about specific product, moreover results shows that social commerce has compelling effect on purchase decision process.

Our studies intended to introduce and examine the mediation role of information sharing and moderating role of evaluation which may improve the assessment of social commerce websites (Huang & Benyoucef, 2017). So there is a room to examine the process by which consumer get information that stimulate the organism and on which aspects consumer evaluate that information and in response consumer decide about purchase a product.

Examination of these variables makes major contribution in the domain of marketing literature because this study has been directed in the study of Huang and

Benyoucef (2017) information sharing is needed to examine as descendent of social commerce, so this study will also fill this major gap and it does not stop here we further make addition in this construct and proposed the mediating and moderating role of evaluation, this extension was unexplored in prior research.

One cultural gap is covered in this study we test this construct in the eastern culture that is collectivistic culture. Kwak, Zinkhan, and Lester Roushanzamir (2004) reported that customary contrasts between an eastern and western nation give a chance to look into the effect of varying social values buyers' compulsive utilization practices might be inuenced by individual qualities.

## 1.4 Research Questions

To bridges above mentioned gaps, following are the research question of this study.

### **Research Question 1**

To what extent social commerce designs aspects influence consumer purchase decision making?

### **Research Question 2**

To what extent social commerce designs aspects influence information sharing for a particular product?

### **Research Question 3**

To what extent information sharing mediates the association between social commerce design and purchase decision making?

### **Research Question 4**

To what extent evaluation moderates the association between information sharing and purchase decision making?

### **Research Question 5**

To what extent evaluation mediates the association between information sharing and purchase decision making?

## 1.5 Research Objectives

This research study aim to focus on to:

**Research Objective 1:** To examine the association between social commerce design and consumer purchase decision making.

**Research Objective 2:** To examine the association between social commerce design and information sharing of a particular product.

**Research Objective 3:** To examine the role of information sharing as a mediator between the relationship of social commerce design and purchase decision making.

**Research Objective 4:** To examine the role of evaluation as a mediator between the relationships of information sharing and purchase decision making.

**Research Objective 5:** To examine the role of evaluation as moderator between the relationships of information sharing and purchase decision making.

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

The expression of purchase decision making behavior by the consumers of collectivistic culture seems to have entering in mass consumption society, like Pakistan. It is depicted from past studies that previous studies lack in quantity that focus Pakistani consumers on their purchase decision making because social environment has potential to influence the buying behavior of consumers especially in collectivistic culture (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk,& Gelfand, 1995).

The current study encapsulates the consumers in social commerce design and their purchase decision making. It is supported by literature that importance of information sharing and examining consumer purchase decision making in the perspectives of social commerce (Huang& Benyoucef, 2017). It was question in previous studies so this study plays a vital role to give a loud and clear answer of this question, this empirical study carries theoretical and practical significance.

The current study extends the literature on social commerce design and its impact on the purchase decision making and this relationship is mediated by information

sharing as well as moderated by evaluation. In the prior study of marketing domain the literature of social commerce design and information sharing is not conclusive. Furthermore we integrate some aspects of social commerce design e.g. usability factor, functional factors and social factors of the website design which stimulate the customers in order to make purchase decision as a response. Current study make more contribution to enhance the previous marketing studies by proposing the relations on usability factor, functional factor and social factor with the mediating role of information sharing which leads towards purchase decision making.

This study also has practical significance and it helps marketers, managers and field researchers to understand the influence of social commerce design on purchase decision making. Consumers buying behavior is ultimate action and cause to raise revenue so practical officials may get idea about each type of consumer and premises in which they can make moves, consumer is an asset and no one is ready to lose this asset. So that, this study is helpful to get more advantages. Marketing procedures urging individuals to see the splendid side of life could entertain advertisers, customers, and businesses amid the time of retreat confronting our worldwide economy (ChienHuang& HungChou, 2012). This study also contribute in a way by giving clear picture how cognitive intention of consumers effected by information sharing factors to buy a product or service in future convert into actions or ultimate purchase decision.

This study will layout numerous reasons of social commerce design in forward thinking organizations. Results of this study provide an appropriate examination of information sharing principles which enable customers to make a purchase decision. Furthermore, study will structure the theoretical basis for further studies on these construct. The present study collection contributes to the identification of theoretically significant mediator moderator relationship. Present study negotiate theses gaps as mediator and moderator mechanism.

The study will be advantageous for the disparate national as well as multinational companies which are doing their business in Pakistan and it will be valuable for the marketers to focus on their customers in an effective way. Our study will help advertisers as well as the student of this field in understanding and catering the

need of customers in a better and ethical manner respecting the rich culture as well as to help in understanding the setting and situation in which sales performance take place in Pakistan.

## 1.7 Organization of the Study

Next the organization of the study includes the literature review, theoretical framework and hypothesis in this paper. This paper will also discuss the methodology, findings and discussion in addition conclusion, implication and future research directions. The chapter of literature review will comprised of the details of the past study about social commerce design and its aspect (usability factor, functional factors and social features), information search, evaluation and purchase decision.

In the methodology part we will discuss research approaches, philosophy of research, the population of study, the sample and data collection method, then we collect the data from the sample and then apply different results on our collected data in order to check that our purposed hypothesis are supported by that data or not. Methodology of our research is quantitative so we can use survey based method to collect fact and figures to support our hypothesis.

The last chapter will be about the discussion and conclusion will be on the base of concluded result after implication, limitation and direction for future research.

## 1.8 Supporting Theory

Stimulus Organism Response (S-O-R) model underpinning all the variables of the present study. Stimulus Organism Response model (Mehrabian& Russell, 1974) which is extension of Stimulus Response model and proposed by Woodworth and Schlosberg (1954). This theory disclose that, stimulation reaction of human and actions are embedded by an organismic factor. There are procedures and structures which are based on biological and psychological components. The broader

concept is cognitive activity which further can be divided into mental states (feelings, imagination, thoughts) and mental processes (judgments, thinking) as a function of stimulation, motivation, experience and knowledge.

This theory describe that mental activity is based on sensual system which are based on foundations of self-regulation while relatedness with different objects, machines, animals or persons.

Self-regulation is a management of authentic states (ongoing stimulation, mental states) with desired or necessary states. These states are prevailing considerations e.g. basic value, need, and commandment.

Accordingly, stimulus in classical S-O-R model is defined as, components which alter interior states of an individual and which can be influential and in resultantly stimulates the individual (Eroglu, Machleit,& Davis, 2001).

When behavior of consumer is portrayed as S-O-R system, stimuli are exterior to the person which include marketing mix and other inputs (Bagozzi, 1986). In our study stimuli are social commerce which include usability factor, functional factor and social factors.

Organism refers to internal processes that how consumer make perception in the mind. It is the stage in which action and reaction takes place. The mediating procedures and structures comprise of perceptual, physiological, feeling, and thinking exercises (Bagozzi, 1986).

The S-O-R model focused upon pleasure, arousal, and dominance (PAD) which speaks to full of feeling, enthusiastic, and psychological circumstances and procedures which intercedes the connection between the improvement and people social reactions (Mehrabian& Russell, 1974).

Response in the context of S-O-R represent the final outcomes of all said process, in this study behavioral response is purchase decision making. Consumers intentions for browsing and purchasing is the final action (Bitner, 1992; Mehrabian& Russell, 1974).



## **1.9 Definitions of the Study Variables**

### **1.9.1 Social Commerce Design**

Social commerce allows individual to meet and cooperate through web, and helps to share opinions and suggestions by participants, then makes decision about purchasing (Beisel, 2006). Accordingly Baghdadi (2016) argues that social commerce is a delivery of the e-commerce activities and different agreements using the social media environment and by using Web 2.0 software is known as social commerce. Social Commerce can be considered a subdivision of e-commerce, in which social media implicates to benefit e-commerce transactions and activities.

### **1.9.2 Usability Factor**

According to Jung (2014) usability is the efficiency in which nominal user can execute the specific intention in the given environment, effectiveness, and satisfaction.

### **1.9.3 Functional Factor**

Functional factor which is an aspect of social commerce design. It indicates different functions of the websites and properties that satisfy consumers requisite in the accomplishments of consumer required functions and include the accompanying sub-plan segments: reasonableness, exactness, between operability and protection (Stefani & Xenos, 2011).

### **1.9.4 Sociability Factor**

Sociability refers to quality contributor (Guo & Barnes, 2011). Social experience facilitate customers to interact with their social circle (K. Yang, Li, Kim, & Kim, 2015).

### **1.9.5 Information Sharing**

According to (Bilgihan & Bujisic, 2015) information sharing is a fundamental support for consumers to generate, share, edit, possess and disperse information. Constantinides and Fountain (2008) argues that easily accessible information significantly encourage participation and motivate consumers which enable users to actively engaged.

### **1.9.6 Evaluation**

According to Nielsen (1999) evaluation is a method to analyze the usability by providing different evaluators with an interface, which provides base to ask different comments. Patton (1994) argues that evaluation is an anaclisis which is based on common purpose.

### **1.9.7 Purchase Decision Making**

According to Hoyer (1984) purchase decision making is an intellectual procedure which occurs promptly anterior to the act of purchase. Whereas T. Zhang and Zhang (2007) argues that purchase decision making process is a conscious intention moreover, motivation is the cognitive factor of the purchase decision making.

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

### 2.1 Social Commerce Design and Purchase Decision Making

Social commerce involve exchange-related activities which are persuaded by a consumers social network in computer-mediated social environments (Yadav et al., 2013). These activities line-up to need recognition, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages.

The definition of Yadav et al. (2013) elucidate two significant concept: (1) exchange related activities, in which there are numerous stages of consumers decision making and (2) computer-mediated social circumstances, where there are meaningful and personal relations uninterrupted social interactions exist between the network members (Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016).

Social commerce sites are highly attraction oriented, they have online pages and forums where the users who have common interest and opinion are together to share the information and their thoughts about something (Avargus-Weber et al., 2011). Interaction and exchange of ideas on social commerce sites are the best source of information and education (Safko & Brake, 2009) thus, the users of social sites also engage themselves in such activities and content so that they can educate themselves and get updated with latest information.

Major feature of social commerce is conducting different types of commercial sensory activities by using social media to take expedience of online social tools.

Social commerce website involve some activities which are not commercial in their nature e.g. people share their own opinions and different kind of thoughts about the product, sometimes user upload different kind of photos on these websites, so these all are not commercial activities (Liang & Turban, 2011), but sharing of opinions and thoughts on social commerce websites beneficial for the marketer as it helps in information sharing purpose of these websites. Social commerce have the advantage to encourage customers to share product information with their friends or sell products or services using social sites.

In this way consumers most of the time consult their social community for further advice about purchasing decisions. To accomplish such intentions social sites add functions for their users to easily communicate and share commercial information within their social networks (Liang et al., 2011).

Term social commerce refers specifically delivery of e-commerce activities, services and transactions by using social media settings, mostly on social networks and by occupying Web 2.0 software. However, researchers disagree with this term as social commerce is a broader term and can be explained from marketing, computer science, psychology and sociology aspects (Huang & Benyoucef, 2015).

Social commerce design consist of number of different social technologies which facilitates the customers for their shopping purposes, many of tourist companies in Pakistan using social commerce websites driven by the social media which encourage customers to experience the services and different products. Social commerce websites are delivering their services and products to the diverse kind of people, in this way consumer share their experience within their circle of family and friend by information sharing regarding services and products, their trend for information sharing plays an important role in social commerce (Kim & Park, 2013). Social commerce is quite different from e-commerce as in social commerce people share their opinions when they used a certain product or services these characteristics stimulate other consumers towards purchase decision making.

Therefore consumer facilitate the seller in that way while they spread the information as a positive word of mouth, because many of the consumer are not only using the products and services as they are sharing the information towards their social circle (Kim & Park, 2013; Lin & Lu, 2011). These kind of factors can be access by insert the options of rating, review of customers, consumer rating and recommendation options on the social commerce websites (Stratmann, 2010). Moreover, consumer of Social commerce anticipate more on the reviews of customers therefore, information sharing by the seller plays an important role in the purchase decision making.

Social commerce provide feasible means of procuring business advantages by approaching wide market at lower cost with reducing marketing efforts (Schaupp & Blanger, 2019). Social commerce can help enhance the manifestation and site traffic at a lower value of typical marketing, since the principal value is the time which takes to realize the convenience of the effort (Schaupp & Blanger, 2013).

Social commerce allows customers to create and circulate the information within online social networks which plays an important role to stimulate other consumers and plays a role of positive word of mouth (Kim & Park, 2013; Schaupp & Blanger, 2019).

Hence, this study compromise on these three aspects of social commerce design which are quality based aspects usability, functional and social factors of the websites. Accordingly considers the impact of these factors on purchase decision making.

Purchase decision making is a cognition based process which arise in the result if something captured by the cognition. It is the most widely analyzed topic in the domain of marketing to decide the factors which capture the customer to differentiate between different available alternatives.

There are many factors that stimulate the consumer to make purchase decision. Consumers are quality quester alongside they are novelty quester and most of the time consumers are fashion quester and some consumer are brand-loyal as well, these all the characters which consumer possess and these all factors stimulate consumers to make purchase decision (Sprotles & Kendall, 1986).

Moreover, Berkowitz and Limor (2003) argues that decision making is a critical conscious choice between two or more alternatives. Consumers make most of their purchase decisions on the daily basis. The stage a customer go through in making a choice among various elective products and services known as consumer decision making process.

Whereas Simon (1959) describes decision-making attitude by considering intellectual processes, moreover decision making can be organized into a great deal of different times of covering understanding structure and decision. Whereas penetration analysis refers to the information which identify the problem and proposed for solution.

Design indicates the identification of different available options which are available and cause the final decision. These all factors help the customers in virtual environment to make purchase decision. According to Liang and Lai (2002), consumer decision-making process involves five stages which incorporates need acknowledgment, hunting down new information, the assessment of alternative choices, buying and post-purchasing. At the point when shoppers are on acknowledgment arrange, utilization needs created and purchasers become mindful of various accessible items.

The prominent focus of the seller is to admire customers into brand proponents in the social commerce, moreover the objective of the buyer is to make a predetermined purchasing decisions. One or both of these priorities can be fulfilled when a customer shares their own purchasing experiences (Ng, 2013).

Social commerce websites enable consumers to share experience and feedback about product alongside provide information that may stimulate others preferences by expressing their own opinions and experiences. This process can spread word of mouth marketing effects, as it gives an ample resources for consumers to share opinion about products and share information, which can create active and beneficial communications between consumer-to-consumer and consumer-to-marketer.

Purchase decision is an attitude to buy something and some studies prove it cognitive actions because customer is intended to go for ultimate or action behavior.

Purchase decision likewise demonstrates how likely it is that the individual would buy an item in future (Phelps & Hoy, 1996). Alfred (2013) argues that the way consumer took decisions about which things to buy refers to significance importance of the product.

Consumer purchase decision specifically alluded to the activities in which consumer take decision when deciding the things they want to buy are and when making the actual purchase. Constructs of purchase intention, consumer attitudes and their effects on buying behavior is an agenda of direct marketing (Zing, 2014).

Marketers need to identify the consumers decision making style which is the central characteristic to consumer-interest. Sprotles and Kendall (1986), argues that style of decision making is an intellectual orientation in which consumer categorized different approaches in order to make purchase decision.

Zeithaml et al. (1996), found that purchase intention is one dimension of behavioral intention in which we can examine behavioral patterns of the consumers, purchase intention can be used to forecast about the actual behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Many researchers found Purchase intention is correlated to actual behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Oliver & Bearden, 1985) and this relation is already examined in hospitality and tourism businesses (Ajzen & Driver, 1992; Buttle & Bok, 1996).

Using an electronic survey of 1743 online customers on tourism and hotel customers, (Na et al., 2003) found that customers information sharing turns out to be an dominant factor of online behavioral objectives, and that website quality is essential for information sharing. In social commerce, mostly customers wants more social knowledge which help them to purchase decision making process (Haijli, 2012). Moreover, in social commerce customers get information from social circle and such kind of information provide pleasure to the customers (Chen et al., 2017). Such information in social commerce is helpful to fulfil needs of the customers which leads towards loyalty (Chen et al., 2013).

Photographs are also the stimuli which are very useful that can affect consumer need recognition (Cox & Park, 2014). Some studies investigated that there are lot of factors embedded with consumer decision making process.

Liu et al. (2013), argues that customers, sometimes make purchase decision without any planning when they are stimulated e.g. in price promotion and limited time offers or sometimes through an advertisement. When consumer search, they intents to obtain new information which make their choices more informed. When consumer search for information after getting some information about a product that information will process in the mind of consumer which leads towards the purchase decision making. Hence, we can argue that;

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive association between social commerce design and purchase decision making.

### **2.1.1 Usability Factor Influence the Purchase Decision Making**

Usability factors of a social commerce design influence the purchase decision making, e.g. quality information, ease of use and perceivable appeal of the social commerce website stimulate the consumer in positive way (Y. Liu et al., 2013).

According to Pallud and Straub (2014) social commerce website must be user friendly, website should provide navigations tools that provide orientation and stimulate consumer towards purchase decision making. Usability factor e.g. layout and graphics of the social commerce design provide product recognition to the consumers (Venkatesh, Hoehle, & Aljafari, 2014).

Likewise, Preece et al. (1994) argues that usability concerned to make the system easy which should be easy to use and must be easy to learn. Moreover, usability of the social commerce website reflects the readability, coherence, consistency and learnability it encompasses the interactivity, supportability of content relevancy and credibility (Lee & Kozar, 2012; Luna-Nevarez & Hyman, 2012).

Usability of the website refers to the usability of website by specific users of the website to fulfill specified goals which provide ample information and stimulate the consumer towards purchase decision making (Lee & Kozar, 2012). Usability factor include efficiency, accuracy and effectiveness to the users to achieve their



desired goals. Users of the website perceived proficiency to achieve goals without abundant efforts and makes purchase decision. So, we hypothesized that;

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive association between usability factor and purchase decision making.

### **2.1.2 Functional Factor Influence the Purchase Decision Making**

Functionality is another important aspect of social commerce design which influence the purchase decision in a positive way, functionality include set of different functions, properties and accuracy of information which fulfill consumer requirements and ultimately stimulate them to make purchase decision (Stefani & Xenos, 2011). Shaouf et al. (2016) argues that when a social commerce website offered optimum level of functionality then consumer could make optimum use of the opportunity with the use of available information.

Functionality include number of different set of functions which stimulate consumers e.g. suitability, accuracy, interoperability and security. Suitability refers to the specific functions about a task completion, whereas accuracy include the correct result according to requirements. Interoperability refers the ability to interface with the system and security refers to the unapproved login to service or data (Huang, 2018). Functionality level of functional factor enable users to use social commerce websites to achieve greater performance and the results.

Moreover, Huang and Benyoucef (2017) argues accuracy concern of the functionality factor should provide correct result which influence the purchase decision making and suitability factor of the website provide sufficient functions in order to take required response. Accordingly, security concerns of the functionality provide secure information and platform so that consumer feels secure in the context of online payment and search. Based on the literature we hypothesized that;

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive association between functional factor and purchase decision making.

### **2.1.3 Social Factor Influence the Purchase Decision Making**

Sociability is another important facet of social commerce design which influence the purchase decision making in a positive way. Sociability is the factor which provide opportunity to connect with different personalities which makes them friend having common interest to share information of the product (K. Yang et al., 2015). Mostly, online shoppers wait for early adopter response before making purchase decision making because it helps them to reduce the embedded risk while they are intend to purchase (Y. Kim & Srivastava, 2007). Bearden, Calcich, Netemeyer, and Teel (1986) found that existence of two different cateogries of social influence for the adoption process of a new product i.e. normative social influence and informational social influence. Normative social influence stimulates the social pressure for people to adopt a certain product or a service because if people are not adopting that product might be treated as old fashioned nevertheless of the individuals desired toward the product. People observe through early adopters as this kind of information available for the customers on social commerce websites. Customers read those opinions of early adopters and then decide to make purchase decision. In this way social factor of social commerce website design stimulate and help the customers.

Social factors influence the customers when they meet more people frequently on social commerce websites then there will be more interpersonal communication which extends the product knowledge which ultimately cause the purchase decision (Goodrich & De Mooij, 2014). Sociability design are the stimuli for the consumer while making purchase decision because there are many people having common interest which stimulates them in order to purchase decision making.

Sociability include consumer generated content, participation of the different groups and information sharing. It also include provision of task to gather more and more participants in order to stimulate the consumers and establishment the relationship between consumers, which makes them community (Huang & Benyoucef, 2017).

Therefore, social factor of social commerce design stimulate the consumer towards purchase decision making and based on the literature we hypothesized that;

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive association between functional factor and purchase decision making.

#### **2.1.4 Evaluation as a Mediation between Information Sharing and Purchase Decision Making**

Studies on evaluation of websites usability found that usability is very important for website performance. Kang and Park-Poaps (2011) describe different component of the information search and assessment stages can dominate consumers aspiration to purchase through social networking sites while Zhang and Benyoucef (2016) used the five-stage decision-making process which describe the consumer behavior in social commerce. Information sharing stimulate customers and in response customers help each other in product evaluation and purchase decision making (Tajvidi et al., 2018).

In past few years evaluation has been observe consistently as a function on information sharing (Torres, 1991). Consumer reached towards a product in their cognition (Veloutsou, 2015) and evaluate specific product on their own beliefs and the information gathered from their social communities.

Sometimes information consumer gathered can be evaluate based on different attributes a customer already possess in his/her mind, and information about reputation of brand can be used as a evaluator which stimulate customers in purchase decision making.

In the process of evaluation there is an interactive structure design in opposition to user need, according to Stefani and Xenos (2011) there are lot of ways which can be used to evaluate depending on websites usability, one of those method is expert inspection and the other one is rely on user based.

Moreover the second method is based on cognition process which deals and depends on customers information on usability. There is also hands-on evaluation method

to evaluate the website design (Jaspers, 2009), by interfacing each evaluator twice. In this method we have to get a widespread idea about the widespread scope of the structure and its navigation system, after that we have to focus on usability and interactivity structure in depth in which we have to evaluate each design factor.

Moreover, hands-on evaluations results describe the imperfection in information sharing with references. In this method after finding problems we have to take measures in order to rectify those problems (Nielsen, 1994). Once evaluation process have been done, the results of all evaluators contrast and collate in the report to sum-up findings. This report recognize the information sharing flaws in the context of evaluation.

Diaz et,al. (2017), argues that heuristic evaluation standout amongst the most broadly utilized ease of usability assessment techniques. It typically requires 3-5 evaluators. When choosing the arrangement of heuristics, there are two preferences: conventional or explicit heuristics. Explicit heuristics might be nearly hard to comprehend and apply, yet they can conceivably distinguish increasingly explicit ease of usability issues identified with the application's area. Conventional heuristics are typically simple to apply to get results.

A few examinations have researched each stage and portray number of elements related with the buyer basic leadership process. For instance Cox and Park (2014) found that content qualities and photos to fill in as valuable boosts that influence buyer need acknowledgment.

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive relationship between information sharing and purchase decision making, and this relationship is mediated by evaluation.

### **2.1.5 Evaluation as a Moderation between Information Sharing and Purchase Decision Making**

When consumers find a social commerce design and information sharing as interesting and appealing (Zhang et al., 2018), they will be more involved in the

website, and their efforts made in the purchase decision process will be less important as compared to those who find the interaction with the social commerce design as dull and boring.

Stimulus factors refers to content and collaboration aspects while living being factors incorporate individual characteristics, qualities, and self-arranged and socially situated methodology. Kumar (2015) argues that value perceptions for example, gluttonous, social, and reasonable qualities impact customers amid the assessment organize.

According to Hashim, Murphy, and Law (2007) there are five elements of site quality which depend on the most explored online highlights of the travel industry and cordiality sites: data and procedure, value added, connections, trust, and structure and ease of use.

Past studies consistently reveal that information sharing stimulate consumers decision-making process (Parboteeah et al., 2009; Xu & Tong, 2014), for example evaluation has a strong relationship with information sharing (Zhu, X., Smith, R. A., Parrott, R. L., & Worthington, A. K. 2018). Similarly, evaluation has a strong relationship with purchase decision making (Kim, D. Y., & Im, H. 2018). Hence, we specify evaluation as a moderator between information sharing and purchase decision making.

H<sub>6</sub>: Evaluation moderates the effect of information sharing on purchase decision making.

### **2.1.6 Information Sharing as a Mediator between Usability Factor and Purchase Decision Making**

Social commerce design have become a dominant channel which facilitates online transactions. The design and usability of social commerce website plays dominant role in its success. To realize this significance, the design and usability aspects of social commerce websites have been widely spread and examine in recent years

(Nathan & Yeow, 2011). Usability have taken much importance in the social commerce inclusively, it helps to measure the trend of consciousness of the customers (Kirakowski, Claridge, & Whitehand, 1998).

There are some attainable factors that affect usability factor of social commerce website. According to Nathan and Yeow (2009) there are seven factors which affect usability factors of social commerce website, which include navigation, friendliness, interactivity, speed of the website, trust factor, images and use of graphics and font and colours of the website are seven factors which stimulate the customers to purchase decision making.

Navigation is convenient of website that how easy is to use of social commerce website, it should include all possible maps in order to aware consumer which provide a path to customers. Navigation is dominant for user to provide helps while they are searching. According to Petersen (2000) social commerce website with great content but having poor navigation quality would not be appealing for customers. Social commerce website would appeal customers with great convenient navigation.

Friendliness is another facet of usability factor which helps customers. It include shopping cart, customer service, free gifts, guest books and widespread information in order to stimulate customers in purchase decision making (Petersen, 2000).

Interactivity is another factor which makes usability of the social commerce website easier (Finlay & Dix, 1993), whereas Nielsen (1999) argues that simplicity and ease of usability of social commerce website affected when there is low interactivity.

Teo, Oh, Liu, and Wei (2003), reveals that interaction positively affect the usability of websites. Speed of social commerce website is also another factor which influence the usability of website (Khalid & Helander, 2004). Every page of the website should be download in 12s.

Trust factor refers to security of the customers while they are making transaction through a social commerce websites. Tilson et al. (1998), found that trust factor is most important factor in an online world.

Graphic and colour indicates aesthetic design of social commerce websites, which consist of background design of the websites, font design, colour contrast, etc. These factors are found dominant in affecting the usability of social commerce website (Tractinsky, Katz, & Ikar, 2000).

Different researchers has defined it differently. Usability factor indicate ease of use and learning that provide minimum required psychological and physical exertion to achieve users needs and expectations (Sindhuja & Dastidar, 2009). According to Powell (2000) usability of website is the extent to which a site can be used by a specified group of users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specified context of use.

Accordingly, Usability of websites is also an assessment of websites user that how they are doing some task or getting information from website (Yusof, Khaw, Ch'ng, & Neow, 2010). Websites design and aesthetics stimulate consumer in order to product recognition. Moreover, better designing with perceptible appeal and using compatible layouts with more suitable graphics, minimal text with clear hyperlinks these factors stimulate consumer (Cebi, 2013). Researcher e.g. Stefani and Xenos (2011) found that in social commerce endeavors on usability design and different adjustments enhance the performance of usability on websites one hundred and thirty five percent.

Usability plays important role to formulate a healthy relationship with customers. A properly manage and ease of usability can stimulate the customers to make their choices (Mentes & Turan, 2012). Information sharing stage also influenced by the usability factor of the social commerce design (Ranganathan & Ganapathy, 2002). Whereas content, accessibility, navigation and organization of the websites stimulate the consumer towards purchase decision making (Cyr, Hassanein, Head, & Ivanov, 2007). It is dominant for the social commerce Website to write content on these websites in such ways that enhance ways for the users to access online information.

Pictures can affect positively for purchase decision making. Accordingly Short, Williams, and Christie (1976) argues that our perceptible senses govern our perception whereas visual media have much social presence than print media. Fogg,

Lee, and Marshall (2002) found that photos sequent of online articles can enhance validity.

Advertising relied on imagery to build a positive attitude towards purchase decision of products (Riegelsberger, Sasse, & McCarthy, 2003). Researchers reveal that focus on effectiveness of picture, through emotional or social posture, is a key factor to the success of e-commerce business.

Contents and picture portrayed a personal availability as personal photographs and letters can make (Gefen, Karahanna, & Straub, 2003; Riegelsberger et al., 2003). Decision of language can help make a feeling of mental closeness and warmth (Wenger, 1998).

Indeed, even unpretentious signals, for example, "gendered content can bring out responses like those delivered by people, including social excellence effects (Nass, Moon, & Green, 1997). The utilization of normal and casual language can affect apparent social nearness (Nass & Steuer, 1993).

Social commerce design comprises of social interaction and commercial activities that gives an impression of the business organizations to consumers. Therefore business should provide fascinating offers to their customers (T.-P. Liang & Turban, 2011). Websites with high usability can appeal the consumer to use a website for their shopping. Well-designed website has a positive effect on consumers (Fan & Tsai, 2010).

Use of networks in the business is essential part in these days and growing rapidly, social resources are now embedded with networks for prompt response, which attracting scholarly attention as well in social sciences (Arregle, Hitt, Sirmon, & Very, 2007).

Information sharing is enhancing the value between usability factor of social commerce and purchase decision making, which ultimately enhancing the performance of the companies. Information sharing plays significant role in describing the firm performance which stimulate the customers in order to response.

According to Uzzi (1997) in social commerce, sharing of information allows the firm to grow their business. Accordingly Kulp, Lee, and Ofek (2004) argues that



sharing of information on customer needs enhance the response of the customers. Information sharing is a significant and functional area for approximately two decades (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). K. Yang et al. (2015) argues that, provision of sufficient browsing potentiality, personalized information and navigation assistance can enhance information search effectiveness.

Accordingly J. Yang, Sia, Liu, and Chen (2016) argues that information sharing is knowledge sharing between online social communities. The greater networks penetration, personal from disparate cultural, organizational and national backgrounds able to easily share information with an online community (Wenger, 1998). Furthermore, sharing of information in social commerce possess characteristics of both e-commerce and social emotional interplay (Janson & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2005). (Gensler, Vlckner, Liu-Thompkins, & Wiertz, 2013) refers that information sharing invigorate the dynamic interactions of consumers, consumer response make it possible to communicate these information stories with others, which leads towards purchase decision making. Usability and information sharing behavior are idiosyncratic in social commerce (Tajvidi et al., 2018) which stimulate the consumer, and response resulting the purchase decision making.

The current study used information sharing as a mediator between usability factor and decision making, as Wu (2008) argues that information sharing is a better translator and cooperater to stimulate the customers. Information sharing have significant effect for both sender and receiver to become aware, customers gives their response if the information is provided on timely basis (Rai, Patnayakuni, & Seth, 2006).

Tourism industry is a data enthusiastic industry (Sheldon, 1997; Werthner & Klein, 1999) for this purpose, it is quite difficult to observe changes in consumer behavior and technologies that impact the purchase decision. Furthermore, there is an adequacy of empirical data to portray and explain the performance of social commerce in the context of online travel information sharing.

Information sharing in social commerce makes other customers to become aware and to share those information among their circle. However, the issue of information sharing in social commerce, as it possess attributes of both e-commerce

and social emotional interactions has received little attention (Janson & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2005; Ridings & Wasko, 2010)

Tourist behavior of information search involves what to search i.e. content of the information search and how to search which describe that what channel they have to use for information search. Cai, Feng, and Breiter (2004) argues that tourist information search is a dynamic process in which tourist use different types of information sources in order to respond their intrinsic and extrinsic possibilities which expedite their tour planning. Social commerce sites made easier for tourist to search information and exchange the relative information (J. Yang et al., 2016).

The importance of social commerce is becoming prominent subject in different studies. Moreover, researcher e.g. K. Z. Zhang and Benyoucef (2016) argues that online reviews in social media are significant source of information that stimulate consumers' decision-making Usability factor of Social commerce website is the powerful way of information sharing to the consumer where consumer get the information and reach out other consumers which stimulate the behavior of other consumers and in response Social commerce facilitate consumers to purchase their desired products without spending extra time (Bernhardt, Mays, & Hall, 2012). Hence, we argues that;

H<sub>7</sub>: There is a positive relationship between usability factor and purchase decision making, and this relationship is mediated by information sharing.

### **2.1.7 Information Sharing Mediates the Relationship between Functional Factor and Purchase Decision Making**

The quality of a website is based on its functionality. Functionality is the way how a website operates systematically and user friendly (Carlo Bertot, Snead, Jaeger, & McClure, 2006). In tourism industry, functionality refers to the extent of provided information about the websites services or products (Chung & Law, 2003; K. Liang & Law, 2003).

Functionality aspect of social commerce design or the condition of functional websites indicates set of different functions and their properties which can cause to satisfy consumers requisite upon the accomplishment of specified tasks and incorporates some design elements for example appropriateness, accuracy, ability and security (Stefani & Xenos, 2011).

Appropriateness refers to acceptable functions to achieved requisite function where as precision alludes to the capacity to animate the precise outcomes with the recommended level of exactitude, capacity alludes to the ability to team up with explicit frameworks, and security show block informal access to information and administrations. Social trade sites additionally incorporate useful (e.g., look choice, installment system) and nonfunctional components (e.g., mixed media, introduction, designs and formats). Exactly when offered an anomalous condition of helpfulness, buyers can use social business destinations through better relationship with open information and organizations (Shaouf, L, & Li, 2016).

Accordingly, we argued that functionality factor stimulate information sharing and following hypothesis is proposed;

H<sub>8</sub>: There is a positive association between functional factor and purchase decision making and this relationship is mediated by information sharing.

### **2.1.8 Information Sharing Mediates the Relationship between Social Factor and Purchase Decision Making**

Social factors are major contributor aspects towards quality of social commerce design (Guo & Barnes, 2011). Sociability is an easy way in which consumer can communicate with their social circle and find out new friends having common interest, to spread information related to products and their experience while doing shopping (K. Yang et al., 2015).

Sociability refers to participation and conversation (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013). Bilgihan and Bujisic (2015) argued that contribution is a crucial reinforcement

for the consumers in creating, spreading and sharing, editing, conglomerating and dispersing information.

Social feature applications e.g. endorsement, referrals, ratings and reviews develop valuable information for consumers and stimulate their intentions and purchasing decisions (Hajli et al., 2017). Social features and well organized information sharing system enhance the perceived value and consumer loyalty on social commerce websites, therefore social commerce website design should consider efficiency, such as ease of access and ease of use, and task fulfilment (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013).

The prompt delivery of order, system availability, such as the provision of correct technical functions, privacy e.g. information safety, responsiveness, such as expeditious handling of problems and returns, and contact, such as the availability of assistance through telephone or online representatives. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed;

H<sub>9</sub>: There is a positive association between social factor and purchase decision making and this relationship mediated by information sharing.

## 2.2 Conceptual Framework

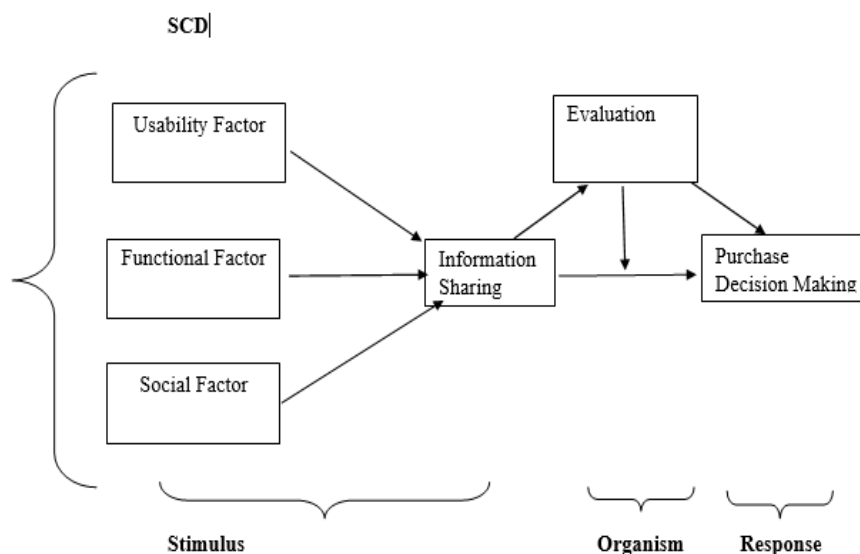


FIGURE 2.1: Conceptual Model

## **2.3 Summary of Proposed Hypothesis**

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive association between social commerce design and purchase decision.

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive association between usability factor and purchase decision making.

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive association between functional factor and purchase decision making.

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive association between functional factor and purchase decision making.

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive relationship between information sharing and purchase decision making, and this relationship is mediated by evaluation.

H<sub>6</sub>: Evaluation moderates the effect of information sharing on purchase decision making.

H<sub>7</sub>: There is a positive relationship between usability factor and purchase decision making, and this relationship is mediated by information sharing.

H<sub>8</sub>: There is a positive association between functional factor and purchase decision making and this relationship is mediated by information sharing.

H<sub>9</sub>: There is a positive association between social factor and purchase decision making and this relationship mediated by information sharing.

# Chapter 3

## Research Methodology

The methodology is basically the measurement of the beliefs and the measures of study in specific domain. The models and techniques engaged scientifically by research methodology are quantitative techniques, theoretical models and paradigm. Methodology of study suggests on the rational basis for selecting that which method, set of methods or the most effective and efficient way to solve this specific case in scientific way, the methodology of each study normally differs from other studies.

Essentially it is basic strategy to provide the best and the relative way as per the type of study to solve this case, because research approach, research design and research questions are mostly interrelated. Researchers capabilities, potential, requirements, and nature of study these all are drivers to select the best research approach for the current study, researcher should be capable to justify the logic behind the selection of data.

Moreover, chapter of methodology contains different portions of research approach, research design, research strategy, survey type, sampling and population and instruments for better analysis of the role of social commerce design in purchase decision making with the mediating role of information search and moderating role of evaluation.

### **3.1 Research Philosophy**

Research philosophy alluded to the different set of beliefs which concern the nature of the reality being investigated (Bryman & Cramer, 2012). In this study we used scientific research which is based on positivism. Positivism assumes that reality exists independently of the thing being studied. In practice this means that the meaning of phenomena is consistent between subjects (Newman, Benz, & Ridenour, 1998).

### **3.2 Research Approach**

In this study quantitative approach was used as a research approach to gather data on the factual basis in order to solve this case scientifically and the reasoning method for the study is deductive, in this methodology we builds up the speculation upon a prior hypothesis and after that plans the examination way to deal with test it (Silverman, 2013).

### **3.3 Research Strategy**

The result can never be helpful until the selection of data is totally based on fact and figures for the transparent results of this study. Critical check to the method was questionnaire survey that leads to objectivity. As we were too much conscious about factual results so we conducted questionnaire survey among the customers and consumers in order to get the data that will clear the actual picture.

### **3.4 Time Horizon**

The cross sectional time skyline is as of now settled, whereby the information must be gathered. Cross sectional study is cost and time effective, by doing compromise on it we used cross sectional analysis in our study.

### **3.5 Data Collection and Analysis**

In this study Questionnaire based survey have been used for the data collection because it is cost effective and less time consuming in comparison with other ways of data collection, its cost effectiveness increases more in case of large sample size. We used hard form of questionnaire for the data collection and personally went to each respondent for the sake of better response and it was more effective for the later analysis, software packages (SPSS) was used to conclude the outcomes from the gathered data; manually it was not easy to examine the role of social commerce in decision making with the intervention of information sharing. Socialization is an important aspect in tourism industry (Aleti, T., Ilicic, J., & Harrigan, P. 2018). Accordingly, data collected from the customers of tourist companies of twin cities of Pakistan without spending much time and cost, second thing which we observed people were feeling reluctant in face to face question answer and they were feeling ease or convenient in questionnaire survey because we were not compelling respondents to respond in specified ways or manners.

Unit of analysis for this study were the individual respondents who used the social commerce websites to finalize the destination they wants to visit. The data was collected from those individual respondents when they were about to leave for their tours. Tourist were contacted at their departure place, both male and female customers are the respondent for this study. Questionnaires were filled by 181 male and 35 female.

### **3.6 Sample and Population**

There is no hard and fast rule for the selection of sample from the population, this selection is based on the researcher logics, knowledge of study, judgments and observation concerning to the study. Population indicates the maximum probable entities as per nature of study we could not consider the entire consumer population of Pakistan as population of this study for data collection, so in this study we



used purposive sampling a type of non-probability sampling to extract the sample from the mass population.

According to purposive sampling technique most probably relevant subjects are targeted as sample of this study with this type of sampling we can get more accurate and conclusive results for this study.

The population for this study was the customers of tourism companies operating in twin cities of Pakistan. Moreover, Population of this study was the consumers of tourist companies of two major cities of Pakistan which were Islamabad and Rawalpindi. All types of consumers captured by selecting all small and mega tourist companies of these two cities as population. But the sample was drawn from this population on the basis of purposive sampling technique; data was collected from this selected sample through questionnaire based survey.

A total of received questionnaire was 250 but after initial filtering 34 questionnaires were discarded because those were not fully filled by respondents. Response rate was 86% as per tradition of Asian culture, response rate is high as compare to other cultures, and 216 questionnaires were considered valid for the analysis of data and for accuracy of results.

## **3.7 Instruments**

All utilized instruments were measured on the five point likert scale, where 1 to 5 every number was illustrative of a reaction by respondent (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree) this scale was utilized by various concentrates in light of its capacity of gaging the reactions thoroughly. The complete detail of all scales are as follows:

### **3.7.1 Usability Factor**

Usability factor scale is been adopted from Huang and Benyoucef (2017). Usability factor have twelve items.

### **3.7.2 Functional Factor**

Functional factor scale is been adopted from Huang and Benyoucef (2017). Functional factor have twelve items.

### **3.7.3 Social Factor**

Social factor is been adopted from Huang and Benyoucef (2017). Social factor have six items.

### **3.7.4 Information Search**

Information search is been adopted from Huang and Benyoucef (2017). Information sharing have seven items.

### **3.7.5 Evaluation**

Evaluation is also adopted from Huang and Benyoucef (2017). Evaluation have four items.

### **3.7.6 Purchase Decision Making**

Purchase decision making is also adopted from Huang and Benyoucef (2017). Purchase decision have thirteen items.

We used hard form of questionnaire for the data collection and personally went to each respondent for the sake of better response and it was more effective for the later analysis, software packages (SPSS) was used to conclude the outcomes from the gathered data; manually it was not easy to examine the role of social commerce in decision making with the intervention of information sharing. Socialization is an important aspect in tourism industry (Aleti, T., Ilicic, J., & Harrigan, P. 2018).

## 3.8 Scale Measurement

TABLE 3.1: Scale Measurement

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Items</b>
Usability Factor	(Huang & Benyoucef, 2017)		12
Functional Factor	(Huang & Benyoucef, 2017)		12
Social Factor	(Huang & Benyoucef, 2017)		6
Information Sharing	(Huang & Benyoucef, 2017)		7
Evaluation	(Huang & Benyoucef, 2017)		4
Purchase Decision Making	(Huang & Benyoucef, 2017)		13

# Chapter 4

## Results and Analysis

This chapter of the study aims to examine the impact of social commerce design on purchase decision making with the mediating effects of information sharing and moderation of evaluation. In this chapter all analysis will be shown in numeric and statistical form for the more clearance of results of proposed hypothesis.

The process of analysis of data contained different steps of reviewing, filtering, arranging data in a very effective way to get the significant results and to maintain the significance of the study for the future decision making. We entered the coded data into statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) for analysis and all the data were analyzed by applying different statistical tools like reliability, correlation, linear regression and multiple regressions to determine the relationships among all the studied variables. There were different techniques to find out the results but with those above mentioned tools we got the acquired results without making it so complicated.

### 4.1 Analysis and Presentation of Data

Primary data was collected for this empirical study and source of primary data collection was questionnaire based survey, after the directly collection of primary data we blended it in a software and then we transformed the data into statistical

and tabular forms, which are able to speak more loudly about the factual information derived from transformed data in a very descriptive and comprehensive way. Next part of this chapter is fully loaded with the descriptive information.

### 4.1.1 Characteristics of Sample

Following are the demographic distribution of sample of this study.

#### 4.1.1.1 Gender

The first demographic factor which is used for this study is gender and the under given table discussed about the sample with reference to gender.

TABLE 4.1: Gender

	Frequency	Percent	V.%	C.%
Valid Male	135	62.5	62.5	62.5
Valid Female	81	37.5	37.5	100.0
Total	216	100	100.0	

V. %= Valid Percentage, C. %= Cumulative Percentage

This table shows that out of 216 respondents, 135 were male and 81 were female. On the criteria of gender, it was a diverse sample as almost 37.5% of the total respondents are female and 62.5% of the total sample are male.

#### 4.1.1.2 Age

Next demographic for which we collected data is the age of the respondents. Following is a frequency table for age.

TABLE 4.2: Age

	Frequency	Percent	V.%	C.%
Valid 18-35	201	93.1	93.1	93.1
Valid 35+	15	6.9	6.9	100
Total	216	100	100	

V. %= Valid Percentage, C. %= Cumulative Percentage

This table shows that 201 respondents of the sample were having the age of 18-35 years which is almost 93.1% of the total sample. This figure shows that majority of the sample respondents were young. Similarly 15 respondents were having the age of 35+ years which is 6.9% of the total sample.

#### 4.1.1.3 Trip

Next demographic for which we collected data is the Trip of the respondents. Following is a frequency table for trip.

TABLE 4.3: Trip

	Frequency	Percent	V.%	C.%
One Time	24	11.1	11.1	11.1
2-3 Time	75	34.7	34.7	45.8
Valid 4-5 Time	64	29.6	29.6	75.5
More than 5	53	24.5	24.5	100
Total	216	100	100	

V. %= Valid Percentage, C. %= Comulative Percentage

This table shows that 24 respondents of the sample were having the trips of One Time in a year which is almost 11.1% of the total sample. Similarly 75 respondents were having the trips of 2-3 times in a years which is 34.7% of the total sample. Similarly 64 respondents were having the trips of 4-5 times in a years which is 29.6% of the total sample and similarly 53 respondents were having the trips of More than 5 times in a years which is 24.5% of the total sample.

#### 4.1.1.4 Internet

Next demographic for which we collected data is the Trip of the respondents. Following is a frequency table for trip.

This table shows that 29 respondents of the sample were having 0-5 hours the use internet in a week of which is almost 13.4% of the total sample. Similarly 34

TABLE 4.4: Internet

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>V.%</b>	<b>C.%</b>
Valid	0-5 hours	29	13.4	13.4	13.4
	6-10 hours	34	15.7	15.7	29.2
	11-15 hours	35	16.2	16.2	45.4
	16-20 hours	46	21.3	21.3	66.7
	21+hours	72	33.3	33.3	100
	Total	216	100	100	

V. %= Valid Percentage, C. %= Comulative Percentage

respondents were having 6-10 hours the use internet in a week of which is almost 15.7% of the total sample.

Similarly 35 respondents were having the 11-15 hours use internet in a week of which is almost 16.2% of the total sample. Similarly 46 respondents were having the 16-20 hours use internet in a week of which is almost 21.3% of the total sample and similarly 46 respondents were having the 21+ hours use internet in a week of which is almost 33.3% of the total sample.

#### 4.1.2 Summary of Scale Reliability

TABLE 4.5: Summary of Scale Reliability

<b>S/No</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Reliability</b>
1	Utility Factor	0.79
2	Functional Factor	0.84
3	Social Factor	0.86
4	Information Sharing	0.8
5	Evaluation	0.78
6	Purchase Decision Making	0.82

According to (Uma & Roger, 2003), cronbach alphas value should be greater than 0.70, these all instruments are reliable because all values are greater than 0.70.

#### 4.1.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation is a statistical test which is used in order to check the relation between IV and DV. If the values of Pearson correlation are close to 1, it indicates that there

is strong correlation between those DV and IV. If the value of Pearson correlation is close to 0 it indicates the weak correlation between the IV and DV.

Table 4.5 shows the correlation among different variables as well as their mean and standard deviation. The table is explained further. Gender has a negative but significant correlation with age  $-.174^*$ , negative and significant correlation with trip  $-.186^{**}$ , negative and significant correlation with Internet  $-.139^*$ , positive and non-significant correlation with UF  $0.063$ , non-significant and positive correlation with FF  $.111$ , non-significant and positive correlation with SF  $0.037$ , non-significant and positive correlation with IS ( $0.087$ ), non-significant and positive correlation with EV  $0.041$ , non-significant and positive correlation with PMD  $0.155$ .

Age has a negative but non-significant correlation with Trip  $-.003$ , negative and non-significant correlation with Internet  $-.100$ , negative and significant correlation with UF  $-.135^*$ , non-significant and negative correlation with FF ( $-.005$ ), non-significant and negative correlation with SF  $-.032$ , non-significant and negative correlation with IS  $-.073$ , non-significant and negative correlation with EV ( $-.085$ ), non-significant and negative correlation with PMD  $-.100$ .

Trips has a negative but significant correlation with Internet  $-.248^{**}$ , negative and non-significant correlation with UF  $-.097$ , non-significant and positive correlation with FF  $.033$ , significant and positive correlation with SF  $.249^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with IS  $.175^*$ , significant and positive correlation with EV  $.149^*$ , non-significant and positive correlation with PMD  $.106$ .

Internet has a positive but non-significant correlation with UF  $.264$ , significant and positive correlation with FF  $.195^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with SF  $.259^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with IS  $.260^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with EV  $.285^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with PMD  $.384^{**}$ .

UF has a positive but significant correlation with FF  $.503^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with SF  $.485^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with IS  $.550^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with EV  $.494^{**}$ , significant and positive correlation with PMD  $.520^{**}$ .



FF has a positive but significant correlation with SF .651\*\*, significant and positive correlation with IS .713\*\*, significant and positive correlation with EV .684\*\*, significant and positive correlation with PMD .544\*\*. SF has a positive but significant correlation with IS .698\*\*, significant and positive correlation with EV .620\*\*, significant and positive correlation with PMD .552\*\*. IS has a positive but significant correlation with EV .717\*\*, significant and positive correlation with PMD .530\*\*. EV has a positive but significant correlation with PMD .468\*\*.

TABLE 4.6: Correlation Analysis

VR	M	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Gender</b>	1.38	0.485	1									
<b>Age</b>	1.07	0.255	-0.174*	1								
<b>Trip</b>	2.68	0.968	-0.186**	-0.003	1							
<b>Internet</b>	3.45	1.43	-0.139*	-0.100	0.248**	1						
<b>UF</b>	3.74	0.68	0.063	-0.135*	0.097	0.264	1					
<b>FF</b>	4.01	0.66	0.111	-0.005	0.032	0.195**	0.503**	1				
<b>SF</b>	4.07	0.74	0.037	-0.032	0.249**	0.259**	0.485**	0.651**	1			
<b>IS</b>	4.05	0.71	0.087	-0.73	0.175*	0.260**	0.550**	0.713**	0.698**	1		
<b>EV</b>	4.01	0.81	0.041	-0.85	0.149*	0.285**	0.494**	0.689**	0.620**	0.717**	1	
<b>PDM</b>	3.73	0.67	0.155	-0.100	0.106	0.348**	0.520**	0.544**	0.552**	0.530**	0.468**	1

#### 4.1.4 Regression Analysis

TABLE 4.7: Regression Analysis

Predictor	Purchase Decision Making		
	Beta	R2	Change R2
<b>Step 1</b>			
Control Variables		0.167**	
<b>Step 2</b>			
Social Commerce Design	0.668**	0.458**	0.291**

Note:  $p < .05^*$ ,  $p < .01^{**}$

Regression Analysis was conducted to find out the direct relationship of Independent Variables i.e. Social Commerce Design with the Purchase decision making. This analysis depicts how a variation in the value of Independent Variable changes the unique value of Dependent Variable while keeping other variables constant. So, this table partially supports our hypothesis  $H_1$  shows which states that Social Commerce Design will have a positive and significant relationship with Purchase decision making.

The results of Social Commerce Design show that although the relationship is significant but positive ( $\beta = 0.668^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = .458$ ) depicts that Social Commerce Design explain 45.8% of variation in Purchase decision making. Similarly, change in coefficient of determination ( $\delta R^2 = 0.291^{**}$ ) means that Social Commerce Design alone accounts for 29.1% variation in Purchase decision making. So, our hypothesis  $H_1$ , which states that Social Commerce Design will have a significant and positive relationship with Purchase decision making, is supported.

#### 4.1.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression Analysis were conducted to find out the direct relationship of Independent Variables i.e. Usability Factor, Functional Factor, Social Factor with the Purchase decision making. This analysis depicts how a variation in the value of Independent Variable changes the unique value of Dependent Variable while keeping other variables constant. So, this table partially supports our hypothesis  $H_2$ ,

TABLE 4.8: Multiple Regression Analysis

Predictor	Purchase Decision Making		
	Beta	R2	Change R2
<b>Step 1</b>			
Control Variables		0.167**	
<b>Step 2</b>			
Usability Factor	0.228**		
Functional Factor	0.219**		
Social Factor	0.222**	0.463**	0.296**

Note:  $p < .05^*$ ,  $p < .01^{**}$

UF= Utility Function, FF= Functional Factor, SS= Social Factor

H<sub>3</sub>, H<sub>4</sub> shows which states that UF, FF, SF will have a positive and significant relationship with Purchase decision making.

The results of UF show that although the relationship is significant but positive ( $\beta = 0.228^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The results of FF show that although the relationship is significant but positive ( $\beta = 0.219^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The results of SF show that although the relationship is significant but positive ( $\beta = 0.222^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = .463$ ) depicts that UF, FF, SF explain 46.3% of variation in Purchase decision making. Similarly, change in coefficient of determination ( $\delta R^2 = .296^{**}$ ) means that UF, FF, SF alone accounts for 29.6% variation in Purchase decision making. So, our hypothesis H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>3</sub>, H<sub>4</sub> which states that UF, FF, SF will have a significant and positive relationship with Purchase decision making, is supported.

#### 4.1.6 Mediation Analysis

For conducting the mediational analysis we used bootstrapping method which was presented by Preacher and Hayes (2008). This is a non-parametric method which provides us the true indirect effect at different confidence intervals e.g. 90%, 95% and 99% confidence intervals. In this thesis we have used 95% confidence interval. Bootstrapping provides us upper and lower limits and we have to look if zero is present at 95% confidence interval.

If zero is present, the indirect effect of mediation is non-significant while if zero is not present then we can conclude that indirect effect is significant i.e. the relationship between Independent Variable and Dependent Variable is significantly mediated via Mediating Variable. In fact, the bootstrapping method saves us from the backdrops of older method of mediation i.e. stepwise mediation (Hayes, 2013). Similarly, bootstrapping also enable us to get better estimates because it allows resampling with replacement approach. In this thesis, we used 5000 bootstrapped samples with a confidence interval of 95%. PROCESS Macro utility of IBM SPSS was installed as Add-on. This add-on incorporates all the 76 models by Preacher and Hayes and enables us to select that specific model for bootstrapping which is aligned with our theoretical framework. We used the 4th model. We run this model of bootstrapping to get the indirect effect of Satisfaction between independent variables UF, FF, SF and dependent variable Purchase decision making.

TABLE 4.9: Mediation Analysis

IV	Bootstrapping Results for						Indirect Effect	
	Effect of IV on M	Effect of M on DV	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	LL 95CI	UL 95CI	
<b>UF</b>	0.57**	0.32**	0.33**	0.18**	0.51**	0.1028	0.2945	
<b>FF</b>	0.77**	0.27**	0.34**	0.20**	0.55**	0.0759	0.3374	
<b>SF</b>	0.67**	0.26**	0.32**	0.17**	0.50**	0.0713	0.2928	

Note: \*p<.05, p<.01\*\*

IV= Independent Variable, M= Mediator, DV= Dependent Variable, LL= Lower Limit, UL= Upper Limit, UF= Utility Factor, FF= Functional Factor, SS= Social Factor, IS= Information Sharing, PDM= Purchase Decision Making

In table 4.9, mediation of IS was introduced between independent variable UF and dependent variable PDM. This table shows that IV has a significant impact on Mediator (Effect Size= 0.57,  $p < 0.01$ ) while, as a consequence, Mediator significantly impacts the DV (Effect Size 0.32,  $p < 0.01$ ). Direct effect is significant (Effect Size= 0.33,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Indirect effect is significant (Effect Size= 0.18,  $p < 0.01$ ). Finally this table shows the true Indirect Effect via IS between UF and dependent variable PDM. The upper and lower limits fell between 0.1028 and 0.2945, respectively which means that Zero is not present in the 95% confidence interval so the relationship between UF and PDM was mediated by IS. This is a partial mediation because after introducing the mediator, direct effect still remained significant. So on the basis of these results  $H_4$  is accepted.

In table 4.9 mediation of IS was introduced between independent variable FF and dependent variable PDM. This table shows that IV has a significant impact on Mediator (Effect Size= 0.67,  $p < 0.01$ ) while, as a consequence, Mediator significantly impacts the DV (Effect Size 0.26,  $p < 0.01$ ). Direct effect is significant (Effect Size= 0.32,  $p < 0.01$ ).

In-Direct effect is significant (Effect Size= 0.17,  $p < 0.01$ ). Finally this table shows the true Indirect Effect via IS between FF and dependent variable PDM. The upper and lower limits fell between 0.0713 and, respectively which means that Zero is not present in the 95% confidence interval so the relationship between FF and PDM was mediated by IS. This is a partial mediation because after introducing the mediator, direct effect still remained significant. So on the basis of these results  $H_8$  is accepted.

In table 4.9, mediation of IS was introduced between independent variable SF and dependent variable PDM. This table shows that IV has a significant impact on Mediator (Effect Size= 0.77,  $p < 0.01$ ) while, as a consequence, Mediator significantly impacts the DV (Effect Size 0.27,  $p < 0.01$ ). Direct effect is significant (Effect Size= 0.34,  $p < 0.01$ ). In-Direct effect is significant (Effect Size= 0.20,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Finally this table shows the true Indirect Effect via IS between FF and dependent variable PDM. The upper and lower limits fell between 0.0713 and 0.2928, respectively which means that Zero is not present in the 95% confidence interval so the relationship between SF and PDM was mediated by IS. There is partial mediation because after introducing the mediator, direct effect still remained significant. So on the basis of these results  $H_6$  is accepted.

#### 4.1.7 Mediation of Evaluation

A mediator variable is a variable which control the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable, which means independent variable directly cannot control the dependent variable without the help of mediator variable. Mediator is a variable which also explain the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable. Mediation occurs when zero is not included between upper limit and lower limit.

In this table mediation of EV was introduced between independent variable IS and dependent variable PDM. This table shows that IV has a significant impact on Mediator (Effect Size= 0.81,  $p < 0.01$ ) while, as a consequence, Mediator significantly impacts the DV (Effect Size 0.15,  $p < 0.01$ ). Direct effect is significant (Effect Size= 0.37,  $p < 0.01$ ).

In-Direct effect is non-significant (Effect Size= 0.12,  $p < 0.01$ ). Finally this table shows the true Indirect Effect via EV between IS and dependent variable PDM. The upper and lower limits fell between -0.0215 and 0.2700, respectively which means that Zero is present in the 95% confidence interval so the relationship between IS and PDM was mediated by EV. There is no mediation because after introducing the mediator, direct effect still remained significant. So on the basis of these results  $H_5$  is rejected.



TABLE 4.10: Mediation of Evaluation

IV	Effect of IV on M	Effect of M on DV	Direct Effect	Bootstrapping Results for			
				Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Indirect Effect LL 95 CI	UL 95 CI
IS	0.81**	0.15*	0.37**	0.12	0.49**	-0.0215	0.27

### 4.1.8 Moderation Analysis

A moderator is a variable which strengthen the bonding of two variables and if that variable weakens the relation of independent variable and dependent variable then there will be no moderation, which means independent variable and dependent variable not depending on the third variable.

It was hypothesized that Evaluation will buffer the relationship between Information Sharing and PDM. Stepwise Regression Analysis was used to find if this moderation is significant. Demographic variables i.e. Age, Gender, Trips and Internet were controlled.

In first step, we controlled independent variable for this moderation which is Information Sharing here. In the second step, we introduced the interaction term of IS\*EV. The coefficient of determination  $R^2$  is 0.425 depicts that IS explain 42.5% of variation in PDM. Value of slope coefficient = .016 indicates that a unit change in IS\*EV shall yield a 16.0% units change in PDM while the sign is positive which means that Evaluation weakens the relationship between Information Sharing and Purchase Decision Making.

Thus  $H_3$  was not supported that Evaluation significantly moderates the relationship between Information Sharing and Purchase Decision Making.

TABLE 4.11: Moderation Analysis

Predictor	Purchase Decision Making		
	Beta	R2	Change R2
<b>Step 1</b>			
IS	0.425**	0.351	0.183**
<b>Step 2</b>			
ISxEV	0.016	0.354	0.003

Note:  $p < .05^*$ ,  $p < .01^{**}$

PDM= Purchase Decision Making, IS= Information Sharing, EV=Evaluation, PDM= Purchase Decision Making

## 4.2 Summery of Hypothesis Accepted and Rejected

TABLE 4.12: Hypothesis Decision

Hs	Statement	Results
H1	There is a positive association between social commerce design and purchase decision making.	Accepted
H2	There is a positive association between usability factor and purchase decision making.	Accepted
H3	There is a positive association between functional factor and purchase decision making.	Accepted
H4	There is a positive association between social factor and purchase decision making.	Accepted
H5	There is a positive relationship between information sharing and purchase decision making, and this relationship is mediated by evaluation.	Rejected
H6	There is a positive relationship between information sharing and purchase decision making, and this relationship is moderated by evaluation.	Rejected
H7	Information sharing positively mediates the relationship between usability factor and purchase decision making.	Accepted
H8	Information sharing positively mediates the relationship between functional factor and purchase decision making	Accepted
H9	Information sharing positively mediates the relationship between social factor and purchase decision making.	Accepted

# Chapter 5

## Discussion and Conclusion

### 5.1 Discussion

In this part reasonable discussion of results and detail of discoveries will be discussed, alongside the satisfactory avocations and extensive discourse on the different focuses as limitation, implication and future recommendation. This section of study conveys five stages discussion on results, implications of study, limitations, future recommendation and conclusion.

The overall objective of this study is to conduct an empirical study of social commerce design in purchase decision making. In particulars, we demonstrate the impact of social commerce designs three aspects which are usability factors, functional factors and social factors which stimulate the consumer towards purchase decision making and we forecast that aspects of social commerce design impacts purchase decision making and this relationship is mediated by information search. Moreover, we expected that information search leads towards purchase decision making and this relationship mediated as well as moderated by evaluation. Finally, we hypothesized that social commerce design would stimulate the organism in order to take response as purchase decision making.

The purpose of this study is to examine the positive impact of social commerce design on the purchase decision making in tourism industry by examining the some aspects of social commerce design e.g. usability factors, functional factors

and social factors (Chen et al., 2017) which stimulate the organism in order to response. This research is relevant because it will provide limited insight in the tourism industry. To this end, article respond to a clear research need to analyze the impact of social commerce design on purchase decision making. This article opens up new possibilities for tourism industry to manage their websites which promotes their business.

Companies which are engaged in tourism business stimulate their customers by managing and designing aesthetically their websites in order to engage their customers which leads towards positive response and ultimately enhance their business.

This study also expand the findings of Huang and Benyoucef (2017) as we test the impact of social commerce designs aspects on purchase decision making by examining the intervening role of information sharing and moderating role of evaluation. The finding of this study shows that social commerce designs aspect have positive and significant impact on purchase decision making and information sharing plays an intervening role between these variables.

The results of correlation and regression tests provide evidence there is strong relationship between independent and dependent variables, and provide empirical support to the mediating role of information search. Results states that information sharing playing a significant role as a mediator in the relationship of social commerce design aspect e.g. usability factor, functional factors and social factors, all these three aspects of social commerce have significant direct relationship with the purchase decision making. Moreover, information sharing intervene these relationship significantly.

Our hypothesis  $H_5$  which states that evaluation plays an intervening role of mediation between the information sharing and purchase decision making and  $H_6$  which states that evaluation plays a role of moderator in the relationship of information search and purchase decision making not supported. We found in our study that evaluation has no significant relationship as a mediator in the relationship of information sharing and purchase decision making and moderation of evaluation in the similar relationship is not significant, as construct contains the four questions

which should be asked on the arrival of a tour and due to time constraints we asked those questions on the departure of the tour and respondent were not clear about those kind of experience. Furthermore, these questions should be asked on the arrival in future studies which may cause different results.

## 5.2 Implications of the Study

The current study is quite significant from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Most significantly its major focus is to a great extent a current issue that even in the presence of limited literature on tourism industry researchers cannot find the right approach toward buying behavior consumers.

As the competition is increasing day by day in Pakistani markets, so it is very important for organization and consumers to know the impact of social commerce design on their purchase decision making behaviour, and also know the role of information search, how much it intervene while consumer make purchase decision.

Moreover, in the markets of Pakistan there is great potential to absorb customers demand and to boost up the sales, mean customers are willing to pay against their demands and these demands come when social commerce design stimulate the customers.

This study also provide feed to another concept information sharing/search build an intention of buying according to certain desires but these desires cannot be fulfilled until intention are converted into actions. So the route map of information search to an intention (attitude) and from intentions to ultimate action (purchase decision making) is clear by this study. So practically this study will provide guidelines for the organization and individual even customers and consumers are included in these individuals.

No doubt, Pakistani market is offering number of products in every domain; you can find everything in this market through globalization concept. But to make the results of this study practical and beneficial organization should know how aspects (UF, FF, SF) of social commerce design stimulate the customers.

Organization should Plan, Design, develop, deliver the quality services and market the product according to the nature of your customer because your ultimate goal is sale and purchase decision of customer takes place when he/she consider the services are qualifying the criteria according to their needs.

Now on the other hand this study also provide guidelines to the customers/consumers, Pakistani market is growing day by day ,each day starts with new entry of any organization so it is responsibility of customers as well, to think where they should spend money from where they should arrange (purchase) a trip plan. Information search provide guidelines i.e. what is the best option for customers, accordingly they will behave according to their (purchase) decision.

Social commerce design stimulate customers and information search makes them to response by taking purchase decision. Marketer should keep in mind that customers are assets of every organization so whatever strategy they should adapt organization has to be revolve around the customers needs and wants.

On the other hand, there are many theoretical implication of this respective study as well. The contents of this study will extend the literature in an entirely new domain. Moreover it has also provided a new framework to explore to researchers and literature and will help for the better understanding of the studied variables.

No study has been found in the previous literature which examined the relations between independent and dependent variables i.e. Social commerce design aspects e.g. usability factors, functional factors and social factors to purchase decision making and intervening role of information search and evaluation where evaluation studied as moderator as well in this relationship.

Furthermore, there is no research found having this theoretical framework in collectivistic culture, so this study aims to fill the gap of literature. This study also encourages other researchers to research more about these variables.

Researcher can use some other attributes of the websites to evaluate the procedure of purchase decision making in order to enhance the response of the customers.

### 5.3 Limitations

There is no research in the universe which could be perfect, so like every research this research is also not a paradigm. There is always a lot of limitation in every particular study. However, the list of beneficial contributions were made by this research in order to give clear idea about the significance of social commerce design on purchase decision making and intervening role of information search. But as per a quote that there is always a room for betterment, so no study is a paradigm for next.

It carries some limitations and the limitations are there just because of implication of some research techniques as it is depicted from the study this is academic study and being a student in Pakistani context we face shortage of resources, time and funds. By keeping in mind of these lacks we have conducted cross sectional study rather than longitudinal study, this study was a field study so we used questionnaire for the data collection so it carries limitation we used only one method for data collection.

The sample size is limited so it narrows down the concept of generalizability, population of our study was consumer of Pakistan but we took twin cities (Islamabad and Rawalpindi) as sample and from these two cities we took data from the customers of tourist operator which are working based on twin cities.

Some respondents were reluctant to fill the questionnaire, so their reluctance was an obstacle to find pure results in the study. The data collection type is cross sectional so it means we collected data from one specific place at on specific time, so all above discussed things are limitations of this study. Researcher should use some other techniques to overcome these limitations.

### 5.4 Future Recommendations

These limitations can be converted into opportunities by overcoming these limitations in the future studies as we provide an opportunity to the future researchers by proposing these relationships of social commerce and purchase decision making



accordingly researcher can test more relations by minor or major change in this research design.

The above discussion about captivity can be disposed-off by having long time length to direct this kind of examination with the goal that it can have the capacity to cover more viewpoints and to overcome various impediments those are now seen in current study.

This study was cross sectional yet now it's a developing pattern of longitudinal study, with this sort of concentrate as a matter of first importance we can reduce a few confinements and more imperative time we can upgrade the viability by social event information in various time ranges.

We may utilize different strategies for information accumulation techniques as opposed to poll based overview e.g. telephonic meetings or balanced live meetings. Change in the inspecting method and in test size can include more odds of generalizability of this study.

## 5.5 Conclusion

It is depicted from this study that there is a very strong relation between its independent and dependent variables. Different aspects of Social commerce design left a strong impact on purchase decision making, so it provided evidence there is a relation between each aspects of social commerce design and purchase decision making because we measured each aspect. Social commerce design itself has direct and strong relationship with purchase decision making, which means social commerce design stimulate consumers to finalize their destination.

Accordingly, usability factor of social commerce design positively influence the dependent variable and has direct relationship with purchase decision making. Functional factor of social commerce design has direct relationship with dependent variable and functional factor has direct relationship with purchase decision making. Social factor of social commerce design has direct relationship with purchase decision making and has direct relationship with dependent variable.

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In a conclusive way, all these three aspects of social commerce design stimulate customers of tourist companies in a positive way. Moreover, relationship of usability factor, functional factor and social factor with dependent variable mediated by information sharing and there is no moderation and mediation of the evaluation in this relationship. The objective of this research was to examine the role of three aspects of social commerce on purchase decision making with the mediation of information sharing, the model explains the significant relationship of all these variables which provides pivotal foundation for future research on social commerce. This research provides first step towards an understanding of how these aspects can be utilize in Pakistani context in social commerce for maximum benefits.

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# Appendix-A

## 5.6 Research-Questionnaire

**Dear Respondent,**

I am a research degree student at Capital University of Science Technology Islamabad. Currently, I am pursuing research on **social commerce and purchase decision making** in tourism industry. This research is important for tourist to enhance their social commerce experience. Therefore, your participation in this survey is also important. This survey takes approximately 08-10 minutes. All information provided will remain confidential and will be used only for research purpose. Please choose the most appropriate option which defines you best. I am thankful to you for your time and participation.

Regards,

**Shahzad Mahmood**

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**Section 1: Demographics**

Please select your gender.				
Male		Female		
Please select your age range.				
18-35		35+		
Frequency of yearly trip.				
1 time	2-3 times	4-5 times	More than 5	
How many hours a week do you spend on the internet?				
0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+

**Encircle:** 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

**Section 2: Purchase Decision**

	<b>Purchase Decision</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if a social commerce website is designed aesthetically.					
2	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if information presented on a social commerce website is useful.					
3	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if all relevant product information is accessible on a social commerce websites.					
4	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if navigation tools support my movements within a social commerce websites.					
5	It would encourage my purchase decision if content on a social commerce website is well organized.					
6	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if all commercial activities on a social commerce website are performed in a secure manner.					
7	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if customers personal information on a social commerce websites is protected.					

**Section 2: Purchase Decision**

8	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if a social commerce website is easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5
9	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if fast search capabilities are available on a social commerce websites.					
10	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if online salespersons are available to assist customers on a social commerce website.					
11	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if customers feedback is presented on a social commerce websites.					
12	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if flexible payment methods are provided on a social commerce websites.					
13	It would encourage me to finalize a destination if an interactive experience is offered on a social commerce websites.					

**Section 3: Usability Factor**

	<b>Usability Factor</b>	1	2	3	4	5
1	Social commerce websites should be easy to use.					
2	Social commerce websites should be designed aesthetically.					
3	Social commerce websites should make content well organized.					
4	Social commerce should provide clear headings and on each page.					
5	All information on social commerce websites should be accessible.					
6	The content on social commerce websites should be easy to read.					
7	The navigation tools should support customer movement within the website.					
8	The information on social commerce websites should be to load.					
9	Social commerce should make its websites customizable.					
10	Social commerce should provide simple website interfaces.					
11	Social commerce websites should provide quality information.					

	<b>Usability Factor</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
12	Social commerce should provide a consistent design of layout through the website.					

#### Section 4: Functional Factor

	<b>Functional Factor</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
F1	Social commerce websites should respond quickly to customer requirements.					
F2	Social commerce websites should protect customers personal information.					
F3	Social commerce websites should provide multiple contact methods.					
F4	Social commerce should offer online help to support customer task completion.					
F5	Social commerce websites should provide search functions.					
F6	Social commerce websites should fulfil a customers order as promised.					
F7	Social commerce should allow a customer to track his/her order status online.					
F8	Social commerce websites should provide secure and easy payment methods.					
F9	Social commerce websites should provide easy online transactions.					
F10	Social commerce websites should provide useful information.					
F11	Social commerce should make salespeople available to help online customers.					

#### Section 5: Social Features

	<b>Social Features</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1	Social commerce websites should build online communities to enable customers to receive real time community support.					
2	Social commerce should provide social recommendation.					
3	Social commerce websites should allow customers to link with people they like.					
4	Social commerce websites should allow customers to respond to content posted by other customers.					

	<b>Social Features</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
5	Social commerce should allow customers to share experiences and knowledge on the website.					
6	Social commerce should involve customers in the process of product design, development and evaluation.					

### Section 6: Information Search

	<b>Information Search</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1	It would help my destination search if complete information is provided on a social commerce website.					
2	It would support my destination search if online social communities that enable customers to receive real time.					
3	It would improve my destination search if a social commerce website is easy to use.					
4	It would improve my destination search if information presented on a social commerce website is useful.					
5	It would help my destination search if well-designed navigation tools are provided on a social commerce website.					
6	It would help my destination search if a social commerce website offers a fast search capability.					
7	It would help my destination search if all information on the website is accessible.					

### Section 7: Evaluation

	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1	It would help me to evaluate a destination if an online community that enables customers to receive real time social support is created on a social commerce website.					
2	It would help me to evaluate a destination if customer feedback is presented on a social commerce website.					
3	It would help me to evaluate a destination if quality information is provided on a social commerce website.					
4	It would help me to evaluate a destination if tour planner contact information is provided on a social commerce.					